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The Revolutionary Vanguard

Battle of Ideologies



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CHAPTER ONE

THE REVOLUTIONARY
VANGUARD IN THE PAST

That a revolutionary party of the working class was indispensable was proclaimed for the first time in Marxism's fundamental document—the *Manifesto of the Communist Party*. Since then the problem of a revolutionary vanguard has never ceased to be the focus of a bitter ideological struggle, which sometimes wanes, only to flare up with renewed force, particularly on the eve and during turning points in history, when it is again aggravated and moves into prominence. The attitude to the problem of a Party, to the character and role of that Party remains the criterion of a true revolutionary spirit in the working-class movement.

1. AT THE SOURCES OF MARXISM'S
STRUGGLE FOR PARTISANSHIP

Marx and Engels initially meant to give the title *Communist Manifesto* to the document that ushered in the history of scientific communism. But then they decided on another title, a title not only consistent with the *Manifesto's* basic content—scientific proof that capitalism would inevitably be superseded by communism—but

underscoring the role played by the proletarian Party as the element capable of leading the revolutionary class to victory.

The purpose of the Communist Party is shown in the *Manifesto* in the context of the proletariat's role as the grave-digger of capitalism. This role, it says, is realisable provided the working class organises and creates its own independent revolutionary vanguard equal to the task of fighting for the end goal of communism. Moreover, Marx and Engels specify the features that a vanguard party has to have. They are, first, that in the struggle of the proletariat of different nations the Communists single out and champion the "common interests of the entire proletariat, independently of all nationality. 2. In the various stages of development which the struggle of the working class against the bourgeoisie has to pass through, they always and everywhere represent the interests of the movement as a whole".*

The *Manifesto of the Communist Party* does not contain the word "vanguard", but it gives the key feature with which the term "vanguard" is linked to this day: the ability to represent the interests of the entire movement, and the Party's ideological advantage in that it clearly understands the "line of march, the conditions, and the ultimate general results of the proletarian movement". This makes the Communists the most "resolute section of the working-class parties ... which pushes forward all others". Regarding the Communist Party's relations with the other forces waging the struggle for liberation, it is stated that everywhere the Communists support any revolutionary movement directed against the exploiting system. But they do not confine themselves to acting against that system; they give an action programme for the future, believing that the movement's first phase is the "formation of the proletariat into a class, overthrow

* K. Marx and F. Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 6, p. 497.

of the bourgeois supremacy, conquest of political power by the proletariat".*

Present-day notions about the role played by the revolutionary vanguard of the proletariat are much broader, of course, than given in the *Manifesto of the Communist Party*. The growth of the working-class movement and the requirements of the practical struggle in the subsequent decades made it imperative to resolve many new ideological, tactical and, particularly, organisational problems connected with the Party's vanguard role. However, the cornerstone of the teaching on the Party is in the *Manifesto*.

But at the time the *Manifesto* was published it was mainly a proclamation of theoretical propositions about the role of the Party, for the working-class movement had not reached any significant scale, while parties of the working class were non-existent. Most of the workers' organisations were small sects bearing the imprint of the recent past, of artisan and guild corporations.

The Communist League formed by Marx and Engels and on behalf of which the *Manifesto of the Communist Party* was made public was regarded by its organisers as the core of the future Party that would "put into effect the organisation of a proletarian Party".**

It was difficult to form a vanguard Party, for it was necessary to surmount the notions that had taken root during the prehistory of the working-class movement and were preventing the proletariat from setting up an organisation meeting with the requirements of its struggle at a higher phase of developing capitalism.

While the Marxists did not see the possibility for the emergence of the Party and for its successful work outside the working-class movement, some groups that were far removed from the proletariat and did not appreciate its

* Ibid., p. 498.

** Marx/Engels, *Werke*, Bd. 8, Berlin, 1969, S. 461.

social role and historic mission counted on accomplishing a revolution by themselves.

As early as 1850, in defining the substance of the disagreements in the Communist League between the Marxists and the exponents of sectarian conspiracies, Marx said: "Instead of the materialistic views stated in the *Manifesto* they are putting forward idealistic views. Instead of the actual relations, they portray *will* as the central element of revolution."^{*} Views of this sort, oriented on delivering mankind from wage slavery "not by the proletarian class struggle, but through a conspiracy hatched by a small minority of intellectuals"^{**} do not disappear with the growth of the working-class movement. They acquire new forms, are adapted to the changed situation and penetrate the Marxist movement. The entire history of the struggle waged by Marx and Engels against anarchism is closely bound up with the development of scientific views about the role of the revolutionary vanguard; it was a struggle against those who endeavoured "to accomplish a revolution precipitately, without the existence of the conditions for it"^{***}.

Although some anarchist schools likewise link the possibility for a social revolution with the work of vanguard, their idea about this vanguard differs fundamentally from the ideas propounded by Marx. What was the road to the social revolution as seen by the anarchists? They contended that it was necessary to set up a "*revolutionary headquarters* consisting of devoted, energetic, intelligent and, mainly, sincere persons—not persons of ambition and vanity—of friends of the people capable of serving as intermediaries between the idea of revolution ... 'and the people's instincts' "^{****} There did

^{*} Marx/Engels, *Werke*, Bd. 8, S. 598.

^{**} V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 10, p. 392.

^{***} Marx/Engels, *Werke*, Bd. 7, S. 273.

^{****} Ibid., Bd. 18, S. 346.

not have to be a very large number of such persons. A hundred revolutionaries would suffice for an international organisation of all Europe.

The anarchists recorded their notions about the revolutionary vanguard in the Statutes of the so-called Alliance, which they counterposed to the International Working Men's Association (First International) formed by Marx and Engels in 1864.

Marx and Engels regarded as "super-childish" these notions about the character of the revolution and the role of the vanguard. They convincingly showed the error of the views expounded by the conspirator-revolutionaries, who argued that "if a small well-organised minority should attempt to effect a revolutionary uprising at the right moment, it may, after scoring a few initial successes, carry the mass of the people and thus accomplish a victorious revolution".^{*}

Marx and Engels held that in order to accomplish a victorious revolution it was necessary to promote the class consciousness of the workers and organise a political Party. The "revolutionary instinct" of the masses, on which the anarchists counted, would not "by itself" lead to revolution. Marxism considers that "the proletariat can act against the combined power of the propertied classes only as a class organised in a special political party opposed to all the old parties created by the propertied classes".^{**}

The adversaries of the Party of the working class as seen by Marxism maintained at the time that if a party were needed at all, it was only to stir passive people and give waverers a push by its actions. They believed that individual acts of heroism would at once benefit the revolution more than prolonged propaganda. They argued that the Party was not the organiser, teacher and leader

^{*} Ibid., S. 529.

^{**} Ibid., Bd. 17, S. 422.

of the masses, but an organisation that constantly sacrificed itself, deliberately dooming itself to destruction because it fought with weapons in hand even when it did not expect support from the unawakened masses. Some anarchists went so far as to speak of a "perishing vanguard".

They held that the vanguard could consist solely of people consciously courting death, because that was the only way the indifference of the masses could be surmounted. The Russian anarchist P. A. Kropotkin contended that the only hope was in people ready "to die in prison or in hard labour camps", to sacrifice themselves in order to stir the people by the "desperate actions of reckless men".*

Among the exponents of "vanguard self-sacrificers" there were many who sincerely believed that the only way to awaken a "spirit of rebellion" and accomplish a social revolution was through the personal self-sacrifice of a small group. In many cases these were warm-hearted people guided by good intentions and capable of performing acts of heroism, prepared to endure torture or die, and believing that their blood would be spilled for a sacred cause. They accorded to themselves the active role of liberators, for they believed that the people were incapable of liberating themselves.

In the 19th century there were many attempts to act precisely in this manner in various countries. In Russia revolutionary Narodism (Populism)** produced dedicated fighters against the autocracy. But, as in the other countries, the revolutionaries depended only on themselves and suffered defeat. At a time when the working-class move-

* P. A. Kropotkin, *Speeches of a Rebel*, St. Petersburg, 1906, pp. 146, 154. (Translated from the French.)

** A petty-bourgeois trend that appeared in the Russian revolutionary movement in the late 1860s and the early 1870s. The Narodniks (Populists) believed that history was made by outstanding personalities, by "heroes", who were followed passively by the masses, by the "mob".—Ed.

ment was only nascent, the illusion that a revolution could be accomplished by a handful of persons was inevitable. The artisans and peasants facing ruin, poverty-stricken intellectuals, whose numbers grew faster than they could be given employment by developing capitalism, and the desperate lumpen proletariat formed the social soil giving birth to notions about the historic mission of "heroic individuals", about an "active minority" and about "revolutions not being prepared but made".

But with the growth of the working class and the spread of the mass struggle, the courageous actions of individual revolutionaries or groups, who attempted to do what could only be done by the masses, increasingly became not merely illusions but a serious obstacle to the formation of genuine vanguards, of revolutionary parties capable of leading the struggle of the masses.

Even today one cannot help admiring the heroism of the lone revolutionaries of the prehistory of the working-class movement, their moral dignity, self-sacrifice and revolutionary passion. However, one cannot close one's eyes to the objective harm that was inflicted by their activities, particularly by the activities of their imitators, when the historical conditions changed. It was not accidental that as time passed the heroic in the anarchist movement increasingly gave way to adventurism, that disinterest was overridden by vanity and that crimes were given out for revolutionary actions.

The Marxist theory of the revolutionary vanguard was able to come forward and develop only in a struggle against various subjectivist views about an active minority "accomplishing a revolution". The formation and successful work of the vanguard Party of the working classes depended to a large extent on the exposure of the pseudo-revolutionary spirit which was seriously jeopardising the developing working-class movement.

As early as the 1840s Marx and Engels opposed the infiltration of Right-opportunist views into the Party.

These views were preached by, among others, Stephan Born, a member of the Communist League. In the eight-volume *History of the German Working-Class Movement*, published by the Institute of Marxism-Leninism at the Central Committee of the Socialist Unity Party of Germany, it is stated: "While in questions related to the organisation of the working class Marx and Engels always held that the class contradiction between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie was irreconcilable, and they explained this to the workers. Born advocated a peaceful compromise between capital and labour. He thereby dimmed the class consciousness that was beginning to grow among the workers."^{*}

During turbulent periods in the 19th century, when Europe was shaken by bourgeois revolutions, the worker masses were the most active and courageous section of the revolutionary forces. But initially this was not so much a struggle for the interests of the working class against its direct enemy, the bourgeoisie, as a struggle against the enemies of its enemies, the feudal aristocracy. Objectively this struggle cleared the springboards for the future battles against the capitalist system. Outstanding leaders of the working class appeared in the course of the struggle. Rallying around Marx and Engels, they exercised considerable influence on the entire future of the working-class movement.^{**} During their lifetime much in the arguments about the purpose and character of the proletarian vanguard might have seemed an abstract sphere of theoretical debates. But the logic of the class

^{*} *Geschichte der deutschen Arbeiterbewegung in acht Bänden*, Vol. I, Berlin, 1966, p. 140.

^{**} In Marxist terminology "professional revolutionary" applies to people like them. In *The History of the Communist League*, written in 1885, Engels describes Karl Schapper, one of the first proletarian leaders: "A man of Herculean build, resolute and energetic, always prepared to risk earthly blessings and life itself, he was a model professional revolutionary." (Marx/Engels, *Werke*, Bd. 21, S. 208.)

struggle brought ever nearer the time when the working class would show that it was an independent political force, while the role of its vanguard would become the key issue of the working-class movement.

The International Working Men's Association, which functioned until the mid-1870s, was guided by the crucial proposition that the proletariat could come forward as a class only if it organised itself into a special political Party opposed to all the parties set up by the propertied classes.

The Paris Commune, which was the first proletarian revolution, showed how much revolutionary energy, initiative and selflessness there was in the new, rising class. The naive ideas about the historic mission of lone heroes, of small groups of courageous people claiming the role of revolutionary vanguards, were dispelled. On the other hand, the problem arose of organising the working class, of its ability to create its own revolutionary headquarters, its own Party. The arguments over the role of the Party moved from the sphere of theory to the sphere of practice and were resolved with the broad development of the massive working-class movement. The Congress of the International Working Men's Association in September 1871, on whose agenda the major item was a discussion of the lessons of the Paris Commune, passed a resolution stating that "the organisation of the working class in a political party is necessary in order to ensure the victory of the social revolution and achieve its end objective—the abolition of classes".^{*}

The 1870s saw the beginning of a new period in the history of the working-class movement. "Towards the end of the first period (1848-71)," Lenin wrote, "a period of storms and revolutions, pre-Marxian socialism was dead. Independent proletarian parties came into being. . . ."^{**}

^{*} Marx/Engels, *Werke*, Bd. 17, S. 422.

^{**} V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 18, p. 583.

Although the initial period of the working-class movement, the prehistory of the formation of the proletarian vanguard, has receded far into the past, the problems of those days have by no means become a sphere of impassive study by historians. These problems remain the focus of the ideological battles to this day. Unceasing attempts are being made to create an aureole around those who fought Marxism more than a century ago. Every possible argument is used to persuade people that the views of Marx and Engels on the role of the Party of the working class are not organically linked with the Marxist teaching as a whole. This is being propounded with equal zeal by the bourgeois Marxologists, the Right revisionists and "Leftists" of all hues.

One of the countless attacks on Marxism through the "gates of history" is David McLellan's *Karl Marx. His Life and Thought*, published in Britain and the FRG in 1973-1974. This book was advertised as the first credible biography of Marx since the times of Franz Mehring. Without mentioning the traditional set of absurdities attributed by bourgeois scholars to Marx and Marxism, we shall only note that in this book there is absolutely nothing about Marx's views about the Party. Its aim is to persuade people that Marx had no interest whatever in this problem for the "only country in which there existed a proletarian party was Germany.... More accurately, there were two proletarian parties in Germany".*

The author has thus set himself the aim of giving the impression that Marx wrote nothing about the Party and, at the same time, to depict the great revolutionary as a man interested only in what actually existed and indifferent to what had to be fought for.

It would be hard to establish who pioneered the theory

* David McLellan, *Karl Marx. His Life and Thought*, London, 1973, p. 430.

that Marxism is "non-partisan"—bourgeois scholars or Right revisionists—because they learn much from each other. In any case, Ernst Fischer, who was expelled from the Communist Party of Austria, wrote that although Marx attached significance to the question of the Party, it was to "the Party not in the narrow but in the historical sense". What this means Fischer does not explain: he apparently believed that in the struggle against revisionism the Marxists could not rely on Marx because "within the framework of the International's activities Marx allotted a most important place to trade unions".*

The *Il Manifesto* Leftist group, expelled from the Italian Communist Party for its anti-Party views, likewise declared that "the writings of Marx contain nothing about the theory of the Party".**

But however the past is interpreted from various political angles, history advances in accordance with its own laws and along its own route.

2. REFORMIST DEGENERATION OF REVOLUTIONARY PARTIES

During the latter half of the 19th century the working-class movement made impressive headway within a short period. By the close of the century independent workers' parties were functioning in almost all the European countries. Huge progress was made from small groups of revolutionary workers, from insular sects to mass political organisations of the proletariat. The trade unions linked with the workers' parties began achieving their first major economic and social gains. The proletarian press won an ever wider circulation. The working class evolved into a large social and political force that influenced all aspects of social life.

* Ernst Fischer in collaboration with Franz Marek, *Marx in His Own Words*, London, 1970, pp. 145, 147.

** *Il Manifesto* No. 4, September 1969, p. 41.

Otto von Bismarck, Germany's "iron" Chancellor, whom the powers that be lauded as the "strong man of the 19th century", had to resign his office when he found himself helpless against the expanding working-class movement. The "architect of the extraordinary law against the Socialists", as he was servilely called by the bourgeoisie, had sought to create unbearable conditions for the German social-democratic movement. The workers' party was charged with preaching the postulates of the Charter of the International Working Men's Association formed by Marx and Engels. The "extraordinary law" banned all Social-Democratic Party organisations and trade unions and forbade meetings and the publication and dissemination of Party literature; the police were empowered to banish any Social-Democrat from any town or district without trial or investigation within 24 hours.

For 12 years the working-class movement of Germany was under pressure of this monstrous law. Party activists were sentenced to a total of a thousand years' imprisonment, including 119 years of hard labour, and hundreds upon hundreds of revolutionary workers were banished from their home towns. But the Social-Democratic newspapers continued to be published in and outside Germany. Lenin called the organisation of their circulation a splendid example of the "Red post". The outlawed Party made itself felt everywhere, and in 1890 when the Reichstag axed Bismarck's demand to prolong the operation of the "extraordinary law" for a fifth term, the Social-Democratic Party emerged from underground stronger than it had ever been before. Under difficult conditions it showed that it was the revolutionary vanguard of the working class. Writing of the role played by the German Social-Democratic Party as a front-rank political fighter, Lenin explained in the book *What Is to Be Done?* why the Social-Democrats were able, whatever turn developments took, to play precisely that role. "Everywhere the Social-

Democrats are found in the forefront, rousing political discontent among all classes, rousing the sluggards, stimulating the laggards, and providing a wealth of material for the development of the political consciousness and the political activity of the proletariat."*

The significance of the ideological struggle that Marx, Engels and their associates waged for a vanguard Party became more evident in the new situation. The old arguments have by no means been consigned to oblivion. They have acquired a new content, especially in view of the fact that the social base for the revival of the petty-bourgeois ideas about the role of the vanguard, ideas that had been exploded by the Marxists, does not disappear with the development of capitalism. Anarchist theories had a large following in the German Social-Democratic Party during the years it functioned underground and after the repeal of the "extraordinary law". The anarchists were against parliamentary activity by the Party, holding that the Party should consist solely of hand-picked revolutionaries. They charged Marxism with underrating the subjective factor in historical development, interpreting this factor not as an active struggle of the proletariat and the mass of the people, but as the activity of "strong personalities". Subsequently characterising people, who, in his opinion, engaged in hysterical tub-thumping instead of revolutionary work, Lenin wrote that they "were toying with 'Leftism', drifting towards anarchism".**

"Peaceful anarchism", known as anarcho-syndicalism, became widespread, particularly in the Latin countries, in parallel with Leftist anarchism, which acknowledged only active minorities and rejected the idea that the Party was the revolutionary vanguard. Its proponents were opposed to the Party, declaring that the trade unions were the only needed form of organisation of the work-

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 5, p. 439.

** Ibid., Vol. 19, p. 300.

ing class and that the general strike was the key means of struggle.

As the social-democratic movement made headway the danger from "toying with 'Leftism'" in its ranks gave way to another danger—Right opportunism, which spread quickly and sank deeper roots. The proletariat's struggle for an improvement of its economic and social condition yielded results and gave birth to the idea that the conditions of life could be changed even with the preservation of capitalism. The world's division among the big capitalist powers gave the bourgeoisie super-profits from colonies and dependent countries and this enabled them to throw sops to some segments of the working people, thereby creating a workers' aristocracy that became its social mainstay in the working-class movement.

These processes quickly affected the Socialist parties and the trade unions. In 1907 Lenin wrote: "The general public know that German Social-Democracy is regarded as a model of Marxist proletarian policy and tactics, but they do not know what constant warfare the founders of Marxism had to wage against the 'Right wing' (Engels's expression) of that Party."*

After Engels died the Right wing grew stronger and began exercising more influence on theory, policy and organisational questions. Social-Democracy's election successes led to the fetishisation of elections as allegedly opening up unbounded possibilities for the working class. In effect the parliamentary faction set itself above the Party and its leading organs. In the drive for votes the Right-wing leaders were prepared to deprive the Party of its working-class character. One of them, Georg von Vollmar, said during the discussion of the 1890 Party Rules that Social-Democracy should be not the militant vanguard of the working class but a "people's party" representing all strata of German society.

In the discussion of the first paragraph of the draft

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 12, p. 372.

Rules, stating who could be a member of the Party, all the arguments were over whether a Social-Democrat was obliged "always to support the Party financially". The new wording adopted in the Rules said that "every person who recognises the basic principles of the Party programme and supports the Party to the best of his ability is a member of the Party". The requirement of the draft Rules that the Party programme must be recognised was replaced by the obligation to recognise only its "basic principles". Members were required to support the Party "to the best of their ability". The previous Rules required the payment of Party dues and stated that those who failed to pay dues in the course of three months lost their membership. The question that members had to work in a Party organisation was not raised.*

Although the new Rules were a step forward in setting up a centralised organisation on the scale of the whole country, it contained sufficient provisions for the spread of opportunism in questions of organisation.

Bernsteinianism and its rejection of the end goal of socialism and "theoretical substantiation" of smooth evolution instead of a revolutionary struggle were a natural step in Social-Democracy's reformist degeneration. The opportunist patterns left no room for the vanguard Party. In 1904, Eugen Dietzgen, an ideologist of the German Social-Democrats, wrote: "'Revolutions are not made by people'—those who not only repeat but also understand these words know that the future of Social-Democracy will not be shaped by people, that it will shape itself. Needless to say, human intelligence, mine and yours, must facilitate this but solely as an assistant, not *a priori* but *a posteriori*."** In this eulogy of a process that "shapes itself" there is no hint of the Party being able

* *Geschichte der deutschen Arbeiterbewegung in acht Bänden*, Vol. I, p. 424.

** Eugen Dietzgen, *Die Zukunft der Sozialdemokratie*, Berlin, 1855, p. 20.

to play anything near an active role. Its purpose is reduced to that of a helper, and even then without setting itself a goal in advance but recognising it backwardly.

The Social-Democratic Party of Germany absorbed many of the finest features of the socialist movement of the last quarter of the 19th century. It showed that it was an able organiser of the mass struggle and employed all forms of political activity in keeping with the situation. In it there were outstanding leaders such as August Bebel, Wilhelm Leibknecht, Franz Mehring, Clara Zetkin and others. But it was namely in this Party that the negative features, acquired by the Socialist parties in the period of capitalism's relatively peaceful development, stood out in the boldest relief. At the close of the 19th century it grew increasingly evident that there were two trends in the working-class movement—a revolutionary and an opportunist trend. In Lenin's summary of the correspondence of Marx and Engels the reason for the softening of the militant spirit of the working-class movement is underscored: "*The demoralisation of the workers by the peaceful epoch.*"*

This trend was to be observed in all the capitalist countries without exception. The specifics of the various parties and the different political conditions of their work affected the various schools of opportunism in the different countries. But in all its varieties opportunism abolishes the Party as vanguard in the Marxist sense. The reformist parties still have a considerable following among the working people. But not every force that has a mass following becomes a vanguard.

A movement may be headed in order to render it leaderless; it is possible to have the support of the masses and suppress their energy, dampen their spirit, corrupt them by adaptation to the exploiting system and belittle

* V. I. Lenin, *Summary of the Correspondence of K. Marx and F. Engels for 1844-1883*, Moscow, 1968, p. 34 (in Russian).

the tasks and scale of the working-class movement. In comparing the new elements that appeared after the first period of the spread of Marxism, Lenin wrote: "The second period (1872-1904) was distinguished from the first by its 'peaceful' character, by the absence of revolutions... Socialist parties, basically proletarian, were formed everywhere, and learned to use bourgeois parliamentarism and to found their own daily press, their educational institutions, their trade unions and their co-operative societies." The teaching of Marx, Lenin noted, was triumphing overwhelmingly and *moving in breadth*, but the enemies of Marxism, coming forward as socialist *opportunism*, "interpreted the period of preparing the forces for great battles as renunciation of these battles".*

In the epoch of imperialism with its new revolutionary possibilities, the working-class movement of Germany, Britain, France and other countries acted virtually without having its own militant political vanguard. The downfall of the Second International, the renunciation of proletarian internationalism in the name of bellicose chauvinism and rejection of revolutionary forms of struggle in effect led to Social-Democracy's self-inclusion in the capitalist system. Much later, in 1934, when it became clear that Social-Democracy was helpless against fascism, Otto Bauer, leader of the Austrian Social-Democrats, said: "One can now see how difficult it is for a Party that had oriented itself on legal activities within the framework of bourgeois democracy and adapted itself to it to go over suddenly to revolutionary action. Leaders who had been good parliamentarians, trade unionists and organisers on the soil of democracy were dismayed when faced by the bold decisions that a coup required."** But even these words were merely a fleeting insight.

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 18, pp. 583, 584.

** Otto Bauer, *Zwischen zwei Weltkriegen? Die Krise der Weltwirtschaft, der Demokratie und des Sozialismus*, Bratislava, 1936, p. 343.

Among the Social-Democrats there were not many, even in the 1930s, able to draw conclusions from the lessons of history. There were still fewer at the beginning of the century, when it seemed that nothing was threatening the unobstructed development of Social-Democracy either internally or externally. Yet the relatively peaceful period of capitalism's development was ending. Imperialism was rising to greater power, accentuating the contradictions of the capitalist system in their ugliest form and making the direct struggle for socialism the immediate task of the working class.

In their efforts to justify their present-day practices, the parties that have abandoned their revolutionary past and become organisations of loyal reformists, naturally, as always happens in such cases, engage in recarving the past. In connection with the centenary of the Social-Democratic Party of Germany, Western Social-Democratic literature, particularly in the first half of the 1960s, asserted that Social-Democracy had never been the Party of Karl Marx.

According to this assertion, during the period in which the "extraordinary law" was in operation the Marxists took advantage of the resultant "ideological vacuum". While not venturing to deny the Marxist propositions in the Erfurt Programme of the Social-Democrats adopted in 1891, the recarvers of history make haste to calm their supporters with the allegation that this programme was imposed by a handful of intellectuals. However, in order to create the impression that the present Social-Democrats have not entirely burned the bridges linking their Party with Marxism, some "destroyers of Marx" (Marx-Töter) acknowledge that the theoretical and practical revolutionary work of Marx and Engels had some influence on the German working-class movement, but only for a short period.* Other "destroyers of Marx" allege that the present SDP programme, which drops the word "capital-

* Karl Anders, *Die ersten hundert Jahre*, Hannover, 1963, p. 31.

ist", preferring terms such as "employers" and "representatives of big business", and which does not mention Marx and Engels, is the successor of the Erfurt Programme and even stems from Marx's *Manifesto of the Communist Party*.*

But this only shows that the present-day reformists cannot entirely ignore the question of the revolutionary vanguard raised by Marxism and engendered by historical necessity. In the world working-class movement, too, there was a force that could revive its finest traditions and create a militant vanguard Party meeting the requirements of the new historical conditions. That force was Leninism.

3. LENIN'S VIEWS ABOUT THE PARTY DEVELOP IN A STRUGGLE ON TWO FRONTS

The first revolutionary Party of the epoch of imperialism was formed in Russia in 1903 at the Second Congress of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party (RSDLP). From the height of the past decades, which witnessed many outstanding revolutionary events, one can see with the utmost clarity how what in its day was solely a sphere of theory became the most vital questions of practical politics and somewhat later turned into an arena of an uncompromising struggle of revolution against counter-revolution.

The formation of a Party of a new type was, in effect, the central issue at the Second Congress of the RSDLP. These words did not yet figure in the lexicon of the speakers, but the opportunists felt that it was a matter of forming a Party with specifics differing fundamentally from the conventional notions in the social-democratic movement of different countries.

In a report commemorating the centennial of the birth of Lenin, Leonid Brezhnev, General Secretary of

* W. Eichler, *Hundert Jahre Sozialdemokratie*, Bonn, 1962, p. 82.

the CPSU Central Committee, said: "What was required was a Party capable of leading the masses and taking them into battle against tsarism, a Party prepared not only to win Russia from the landowners and the bourgeoisie, but also to rule Russia, to ensure the triumph of the proletarian dictatorship. It was to establish such a Party that Lenin waged a relentless struggle against the Mensheviks, the Trotskyites and opportunists of every stripe."^{*}

All the arguments presented by Martynov, a leader of the Russian opportunists, at the Second Congress of the RSDLP against the draft Programme, were that the draft differed from "all the other European social-democratic programmes".^{**} Martynov insisted on the wording proposed by him on the grounds that it was accepted in international Social-Democracy.^{***} The "Economist"^{****} Akimov disagreed with Martynov "that only one or two amendments were needed". He said that the idea of the Party being the champion of the class, socialist consciousness was "very consistently and thoroughly expounded in the entire fundamental part of the draft, from its first word to the last . . . and for that reason the purpose of all my amendments is to modify the very spirit of the programme".^{*****}

^{*} L. I. Brezhnev, *The CPSU in the Struggle for Unity of All Revolutionary and Peace Forces*, Moscow, 1975, p. 161.

^{**} *Second Congress of the RSDLP, July-August 1903, Minutes*, Moscow, 1959, p. 108 (in Russian).

^{***} *Ibid.*, p. 117.

^{****} The Economists were exponents of Economism, an opportunist trend in the Russian social-democratic movement of the close of the 19th and beginning of the 20th century. They contended that the workers should carry on only an economic struggle, rejected the need for a political struggle by the working class, opposed the formation of an independent political Party of the working class and endeavoured to turn the proletariat into a proponent of bourgeois policy.—Ed.

^{*****} *Second Congress of the RSDLP, July-August 1903, Minutes*, pp. 126-27 (in Russian).

The substance of Akimov's views, as those of all of Lenin's other opponents, was the counterposition of the Party and the working class; he refused to recognise the role of the Party's leading nucleus as the condition not only for forming the Party but also for its successful work.

The entire spirit of the Programme, in which the question of the dictatorship of the proletariat was "stated in clear and definite terms, and, moreover, is linked up with the struggle against Bernstein, against opportunism",^{*} asserted the leading role of the vanguard Party, whose mission it was to implement the proletariat's leadership of the revolutionary struggle. The organisational ideas in Lenin's proposals regarding the Party Rules specified such indispensable features of an actively fighting vanguard as centralised leadership, discipline and Party initiative. It was stressed that the cardinal condition for membership of the Party was not only recognition of the programme and material assistance to the Party, customary for Social-Democracy, but also mandatory personal participation in a Party organisation.

The fundamental significance of the struggle waged by Leninism against the opportunist belittlement of the Party's role was soon clearly seen during the first Russian revolution, when, as Lenin wrote, "particularly great importance was acquired by the role of the Party as the vanguard, teacher and organiser of the class".^{**}

In the subsequent years of the revolutionary struggle, crowned by the victory of the October Revolution which started a new epoch in world history, the principles underlying the Party of a new type—its theoretical and organisational foundations, ideology and tactics—were developed and underwent the test of revolutionary practice. It developed in the struggle chiefly against Right opportunism, at first mainly with Menshevism in Russia

^{*} V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 31, p. 340.

^{**} V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 9, p. 406 (in Russian).

and then, as Lenin called it, with international Menshevism. But, in addition to fighting this chief enemy of a genuine revolutionary spirit in the working-class movement, Leninism had to uphold the idea of partisanship in a struggle against petty-bourgeois revolutionism, with various anarchist negations of the proletarian Party's vanguard role. This struggle produced an integral system of views about the Party as the advanced, most conscious, organised and, therefore, most revolutionary segment of the working class. As the entire experience of history has demonstrated, the central purpose of the Communist Party is to maintain close links with the broadest mass of the people and display the ability to lead them and bring consciousness and organisation into the spontaneous struggle of the working people.

The extremely bitter struggle between the various political forces in Russia on the eve of the first revolution over issues of programme and tactics anticipated and prepared the way to the impending open struggle between classes.* Moreover, in 1920 Lenin noted that all the issues over which the masses rose in arms not only during the first revolution but also in 1917-1920 could and must be seen in embryonic form in the ideological struggle at the turn of the century.

The heightened interest that anti-communist historiography today shows in that period is evidence that the problems that were at issue in the struggle between the two trends in the social-democratic movement in Russia at the beginning of the 20th century remain ideologically important to this day. In 1967 the American Hoover Institution on War, Revolution and Peace brought out a multi-tome history of Russian Menshevism. Judging by the first three volumes, the entire publication may be given the epigraph: "What would have happened if. . ."

While feasting upon a host of details and creating the

* See, V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 31, pp. 26-27.

semblance of a scientific approach, the authors are guided by the sole idea of how good it would have been if the Mensheviks had won in the struggle between the two trends. In a book titled *The Russian Revolution of 1905* Solomon M. Schwarz depicts the Mensheviks as the sheep usually depicted on Easter postcards, while the Bolsheviks are, of course, portrayed as snarling grey wolves. It goes against his grain that "the Bolsheviks elevated centralism into a principle, whereas the Mensheviks accepted it as a temporary evil, trying wherever possible to encourage the workers' *independent* activity and to give them a share in Party life".*

It turns out that the well-meaning Mensheviks, who so ardently dreamed of democracy, were the real champions of the workers' interests. Schwarz is not put out by the fact that while in his book the working class is portrayed as being preoccupied with supporting the Mensheviks, it actually threw them out of the ship of revolution in 1917, a ship which the Mensheviks wanted to lock in the harbour of bourgeois democracy. The liquidationist intentions of the Mensheviks after the defeat of the first Russian revolution—their aspiration to abolish the revolutionary illegal Party of the proletariat—are sidestepped by Schwarz. The reader can only guess that the Mensheviks were opposed to the Party principle. Schwarz tries to prove that the Mensheviks worked under the influence of a growing conviction that the "conspiratorial" tradition forced upon the Party on the eve of the revolution by the circumstances of the day, had to be jettisoned, while Social-Democracy had to come out on the social and political scene as an active movement and thereby pave the way to a really large Social-Democratic Party in the future. The Bolsheviks, on the contrary, moved ever far-

*Solomon M. Schwarz, *The Russian Revolution of 1905. The Workers' Movement and the Formation of Bolshevism and Menshevism*, Chicago, 1967, p. 205.

ther in the opposite direction, towards turning Social-Democracy into a "party of the new type".*

By alleging that no Party existed during the revolution of 1905, Schwarz frees himself from the need to speak of liquidationism, for what did not exist could not be liquidated. Actually, however, Schwarz reaffirmed his belief that only loyal bourgeois parties or parties patterned on them could be considered political parties.

The history of the first Party of the new type prior to the Great October Socialist Revolution was, in effect, the prehistory of the modern communist movement. The Communist parties that sprang up in many countries after the Great October Revolution could draw upon the experience and ideology of the Leninist Party and develop that experience and ideology in accordance with the specifics of their countries and the traditions of their working-class movements. In many respects, the experience of Bolshevism anticipated what was later encountered by the Communists of all countries.

Without making a break with the reformists and centrists, the Left wing of the Social-Democratic parties would have been unable to create organisations capable of becoming parties of the new type. In the decisions of the Second Congress of the Communist International in 1920 it is stated precisely what kind of Party was needed by the working class. The decision of the Third Comintern Congress (1921) that the prime task of the day had become "*participation in the struggle of the working masses, the direction of this struggle in a Communist spirit, and the creation in the course of this struggle of experienced, large, revolutionary, mass communist parties*"** was preceded by a sharp struggle against Leftist ideas about the purpose of the Party. Herman Gorter, a

* Solomon M. Schwarz, *The Russian Revolution of 1905...*, p. 245.

** *The Communist International 1919-1943. Documents*, Vol. I, 1919-1922, London, 1956, p. 243.

member of the Communist Party of the Netherlands, adopted an ultra-Left sectarian attitude. In an Open Letter in the autumn of 1920, in which he attacked Lenin's "*Left-Wing*" *Communism—an Infantile Disorder*, he maintained that the main designation of the Party consisted of its own example and its own actions, of preparing the revolution by giving a "strong push". The working class, he wrote, had become bourgeoisified in its thinking and had sunk into philistinism, and those whom we should not be able to attract "by our actions, by the revolution, are lost and can go to hell".*

In the theses submitted to the Third Comintern Congress by the Leftist Communist Workers' Party of Germany, it is stated that the Party should be "solely a nucleus of the most conscious Communists prepared for any sacrifice". In speaking against any enlargement of the Party, Mátyás Rakosi, representing the Hungarian Communists, held that the "Party must consist not of new recruits but only of veteran fighters. . . . Our aim is to have only veteran fighters, while new recruits should be kept out of the Party". The initial draft theses drawn up by Karl Radek for the Third Comintern Congress stated that it was the duty of the Communist Party "to end the passiveness of the masses through the struggle of an active proletarian minority".** The striving to win the support of the masses was branded as centrism, as conversion into a "party of expectation".

Some of the speakers at the Third Comintern Congress asserted that the vanguard consisted of those "who desire and are capable of fighting, tear away from their environment and move forward. These few will perish, and only then will the masses, initially opposed to action, see the

* *Third Congress of the Comintern. Development by the Congress of the Political Guideline of the Communist Movement. The Communists and the Masses*, Moscow, 1975, pp. 99, 100 (in Russian).

** *Ibid.*, pp. 101, 110, 134-35.

light. . . . Generally speaking, this is the only correct way to enlist the masses to our side".* Some went so far as to declare that the sole criterion of the existence of a Party was whether there was an organisation that was itself "prepared to take revolutionary action".

The anarchist idea of an expendable vanguard was revived in fantastic form in the heads of some revolutionaries, who had joined the communist movement. The idea about the Party being a contingent of pioneers "making" the revolution became fairly widespread in some parties.

Notions of this kind sprang from the idea that the vanguard was that part of the class which acted in isolation, did not lead the masses, but, on the contrary, did the work for them. At a sitting of the Comintern Executive on June 17, 1921, Lenin said that the preparations for the revolution were "not being made by one party".** At the Third Comintern Congress his speech criticising those who naively believed that the Great October Socialist Revolution was accomplished solely by a numerically small Bolshevik Party was permeated with the belief that the Party's strength lay in its links with the masses, that to be the vanguard meant displaying the ability to lead the masses at all phases of their class struggle. In October 1917 the Party had the support not only of the majority of the workers, but also of huge numbers of peasants and troops; this ensured the victory of the socialist revolution.

Non-Marxist views about the Party's role as the revolutionary vanguard continued to be preached in the ranks of the international communist movement. Depending on the historical features of the country or region concerned, these views acquired a specific hue.

* *Third World Congress of the Communist International. Verbatim Report*, Petrograd, 1922, p. 293 (in Russian).

** *Third Congress of the Comintern. Development by the Congress of the Political Guideline of the Communist Movement. The Communists and the Masses*, p. 175 (in Russian).

At the first conference of Latin American Communist parties in 1929 it was necessary, for example, patiently to explain the harm of the "Red Caudillism" slogan that some hotheads were eager to put forward. Speaking on behalf of the Communist Party of Argentina, Victorio Codovilla showed that it was wrong to regard the subjective factor as an "élite having the trappings of Red leaders". He devoted his speech to the role of the vanguard Party, criticising those who feared that it would take a long time to form genuinely Communist parties in Latin America, and suggested a return "to the tradition of the petty-bourgeois revolutionary movement, namely, to the Caudillism (leader) tradition". He opposed the proposal for replacing the Party with "Red leaders".*

The Latin American Communist parties would not have become the force they are today had they not delivered themselves from the petty-bourgeois idea that a "leader" could replace the Party. In other regions, too, the communist movement developed in struggle with misguided conceptions about the purpose of the revolutionary vanguard.

Without surmounting the Leftist, essentially sectarian, views about the revolutionary vanguard, the Communist parties would have been unable to play an effective part in the day-to-day struggle of the working masses for the satisfaction of their vital demands or participate in the work of the trade unions and other public organisations on the threshold of capitalism's partial stabilisation.

When the fascist danger became global and threat of another world war hung over all nations, the communist movement had to answer the questions of what the parties should be like in the new situation, what features had to be accentuated and what shortcomings had to be rectified the quickest.

* *El movimiento revolucionario Latino Americano. Versiones de la Primera Conferencia Comunista Latino Americana, Junio de 1929*, Buenos Aires, 1929, pp. 190-91.

The Seventh Comintern Congress (1935), which mapped out a clear policy of struggle against fascism and war, for the preservation and extension of democratic freedoms as the condition for hastening the socialist revolution, gave much of its attention to the problem of the revolutionary vanguard, to the vanguard's specifics that had to be developed in the new situation.

At the congress criticism was levelled at the national nihilism of some Communist parties, at the underestimation of the fact that the communist vanguard had not only to be guided by internationalism but act as a patriotic force, as the spokesman of the true national interests of its people.

In view of the anti-fascist struggle, great significance was attached to developing Lenin's propositions on a united workers' front, on the ability of the Communist parties to form alliances with all the forces opposed to fascism. Sectarian complacency, narrowness in politics, lack of flexibility and the inability to adopt decisions quickly and independently in keeping with the changing situation were becoming a serious obstacle to the fulfilment by the Communist parties of their vanguard role.

The decisions passed at the Seventh Comintern Congress and the broad discussion that took place in that period in the international communist movement helped to foster the development of the Marxist-Leninist parties, which, by and large, conformed to the new requirements of the revolutionary struggle. The idea of an anti-fascist Popular Front skilfully translated into practice by the French Communist Party, the heroic struggle of the Spanish Communists during the national revolutionary war of 1936-1939, the practice of the Communist Party of Chile during the period of the Popular Front (1936-1941) and the actions of many other Marxist-Leninist parties enriched the experience of the international communist movement and demonstrated how important it was

to elaborate the problem of the revolutionary vanguard in the new situation.

The significance of the propositions put forward by the Seventh Comintern Congress was seen most strikingly during the Second World War, when the Communists proved that they were able to become the main force of the mass struggle against fascism. They were the soul and organisers of the patriotic resistance to fascism and the vanguard of the anti-fascist revolutions that grew into socialist revolutions where international imperialism was deprived of the possibility of strangling the revolutionary movements.

The importance of the ideological struggle of the mid-1930s acquired more profound significance; this struggle helped to set up Communist parties as true national forces capable of forming broad alliances against reaction and adopting the required decisions independently.

Historical experience thus testifies that the communist movement, which appeared in the mid-19th century, not only grew steadily but, while upholding its principles and fundamental specifics, moulded the features that were needed most for carrying out its vanguard role. In many cases the struggle over the question of the Party's make-up and purpose, and the theoretical elaboration of the problems confronting it, anticipated the years when these theoretical problems became urgent in practice.

Such was the work of the Communist League and the First International, formed by Marx and Engels. They laid the theoretical foundation for the role of the proletariat's revolutionary vanguard and developed ideas, whose influence was felt as early as in the days of the Paris Commune but received their further embodiment many years later.

The international significance of the struggle for a Party of the new type commenced by Lenin in Russia came to light much quicker, when the epoch of imperial-

ism placed the revolutionary class before problems that hitherto had seemed to concern only Russia.

The epochal importance of Lenin's book "*Left-Wing Communism—an Infantile Disorder*", the profound significance of the ideological struggle over the problem of the vanguard, a struggle that unfolded at the turning point of the transition from the upswing of the wave of revolution that swept across the world to the period of decline of that wave and the subsequent partial stabilisation of capitalism, likewise anticipated the issues confronting the revolutionary struggle for a long time.

Lastly, the full impact of the decisions passed by the Seventh Comintern Congress was seen clearly during subsequent developments.

History bears out Lenin's conclusion that with all their diversity of hues and modifications in time, the views, including those on the problem of the revolutionary vanguard, which the revolutionary Marxists have had to fight in the working-class movement were always "revisionism (opportunism, reformism) and anarchism (anarcho-syndicalism, anarcho-socialism)".*

These two anti-Marxist-Leninist trends are rooted in capitalist reality. As long as capitalism exists it will go on reproducing the social soil for the growth of different varieties of Right-revisionist and Leftist ideology. Appearing on national soil and acquiring features of their own in different countries, these ideologies always, and particularly in the modern epoch, mirror the international situation, the changes taking place in the world.

When the problem of the revolutionary vanguard grows acute in one period or another, the opponents of Marxism-Leninism step up their efforts to twist the history of the formation and development of the Party of the new type, for the past of the working-class movement is more than a history of struggle. There is every justification for

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 16, p. 347.

noting that it is, at the same time, a weapon of struggle, a weapon that to this day helps to fight the proletariat's long-standing enemies, expose the attacks being made on the Party principle under various guises, and bring to light the continuity of these attacks with those that have been unmasked and smashed at preceding phases of the revolutionary movement.

CHAPTER TWO

WHY THE QUESTION OF THE PARTY HAS BECOME ACUTE AGAIN

The years that have passed since the 1969 International Meeting of Communist and Workers' Parties have confirmed its conclusion that "the ideological and political role of the Marxist-Leninist Parties in the world revolutionary process should be enhanced".* This is also dictated by the further aggravation of capitalism's general crisis, by the new possibilities for the anti-imperialist struggle, by the rising scale of the working people's actions against state-monopoly capitalism and by the growing need for joint action by all the forces opposed to imperialism.

1. GROWTH OF THE ROLE OF THE SUBJECTIVE FACTOR

The end of the 1960s and the beginning of the 1970s witnessed new developments in the capitalist system, the most notable of which was its increasing instability. The new balance of power between socialism and capitalism in the world, the strengthening of the independent coun-

* *International Meeting of Communist and Workers' Parties, Moscow 1969, Prague, 1969, p. 38.*

tries acting against imperialism and the mounting economic difficulties are exercising a steadily growing influence on the processes and contradictions in the capitalist countries.

Twenty years ago the Soviet Union's industrial output was less than one-third that of the USA, while in 1973 it topped 75 per cent of the USA's level. The socialist way of life, with its moral values, mode of consumption and approach to the solution of social and economic problems that have become extremely acute as a result of the scientific and technological revolution (for instance, the problem of employment, urbanisation, public transport, environmental protection, and so forth) is exercising a growing revolutionising influence in the world. The fact that in socialist countries professional, including higher, education is open to all young people cannot remain unnoticed by young people in the capitalist states who strive to receive an education despite the social barriers. Medicare, the housing problem and much else are spheres in which a comparison between the two social systems is inevitable, much as the achievements of socialism inevitably influence the working people of the capitalist countries and spur their efforts to secure social changes.

Today socialism is a powerful material and moral factor, and by its very existence it stimulates the struggle of the working people against the capitalist system and actively influences the countries that have shaken off colonial dependence.

Divided into two social-economic systems, the world cannot help continuously comparing the processes taking place in the capitalist countries and in countries that have put an end to capitalist exploitation. The socialist system influences the planet's psychological climate. There is no yardstick that can accurately show how the achievements of socialist countries participate in the social struggle conducted outside their boundaries and what the direct con-

tribution of these achievements is to the gains that the working people of the capitalist world have achieved at a tremendous price. But the very fact that during any exacerbation of the social contradictions in any capitalist country as a result of mass strikes, and during election campaigns the ruling classes go all out to discredit existing socialism, to misrepresent and distort it, is evidence of their recognition that world socialism is a factor tangibly present in the internal life of the capitalist world.

Socialism's confident progress is particularly impressive against the background of the difficulties that have been increasing in the capitalist world since the close of the 1960s.

At the 1969 International Meeting of Communist and Workers' Parties it was recorded that in its efforts to adapt itself to the conditions of the struggle between the two systems and to the requirements of the scientific and technological revolution, present-day imperialism has acquired a set of new features. State stimulation of monopoly concentration of production and capital, state redistribution of an increasing portion of the national income, the placing of military orders with the monopolies, government financing of industrial development and research programmes, the programming of economic development on a national scale, imperialist integration, the new forms of exporting capital and the use of other levers were pursuing the aim of surmounting or relaxing the antagonistic contradictions inherent in capitalism. "However, state-monopoly regulation, exercised in forms and on a scale which meet the interests of monopoly capital and are aimed at preserving its rule, is unable to control the spontaneous forces of the capitalist market."*

This conclusion was drawn at a time when the innumerable studies of bourgeois economists and sociologists and

* *International Meeting of Communist and Workers' Parties, Moscow 1969*, p. 19.

the propaganda media using the arguments presented in these studies were endeavouring to prove that capitalism had shed the negative aspects of the early phase of its development. The ruling class is even prepared to admit backdatedly that the system represented by it had at one time been inhuman, exploiting and brutal. But now, it alleges, all this has receded into the past. Neocapitalism is devoid of such vices, it is, it claims, no longer a class society, declaring that both the owners of the means of production and the people selling their labour power comprise a sort of "middle class", all of whose members have cars, with the sole difference that some ride in Mercedes and others in Volkswagen.

In its attempts to prove that the character of the distribution of the gross national product depends not on the relations of production but exclusively on the level reached by the productive forces, bourgeois science in many cases goes so far as to renounce the term "neocapitalism", using instead the classless term "industrial society". They forecast that in future there will be post-industrial, technotronic and other variants of the "welfare state", the character of which will, allegedly, be determined solely by scientific and technical achievements and not by social relations.

The crisis developments of the 1970s demonstrated the hollowness of the claims that capitalism had found the secret of rejuvenation and transformation. The innumerable publications extolling the onset of a new, crisis-free epoch have, much as outdated advertisements, become waste-paper.

In characterising present-day imperialism, Leonid Brezhnev, General Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee, said at the 25th Party Congress: "Now everyone can see that one of the main myths created by reformists and bourgeois ideologists has collapsed—the myth that present-day capitalism is able to avert crises. The instability of capitalism is becoming more and more apparent.

Promises to make capitalism 'sounder' and to create a 'welfare society' within its framework have obviously failed."^{*}

In the mid-1970s bourgeois publications, particularly the periodical press, began carrying reminders of the fearful crisis of 1929-1933, which shook all the capitalist countries. The swing from enthusiastic laudations of the "welfare state" to sad comparisons is significant in theoretical thought in capitalist society which is growing increasingly unstable.

The aggravating crisis phenomena reflect not only the cyclical character of capitalism's development; they are to be observed where production is declining or marking time and in countries where production continues to grow. The further deepening of capitalism's general crisis is increasingly undermining the foundations of the state-monopoly system, which has obviously exhausted the possibilities for self-preservation that it had temporarily given the capitalist system.

This crisis is entering a phase in which the phenomena that formerly accompanied only the most acute periods of its development are becoming chronic. Inflation, which the bourgeois press admits as having turned into an explosive political problem, is becoming the permanent fellow-traveller of modern capitalism. In view of the heightening economic interdependence of the capitalist countries, the domination of the international monopolies that have in many cases become not only states within states but states over states, the continued rise of prices, the growth of unemployment, the unilateral changes of the exchange rates of national currencies and other destabilising factors are speedily spreading beyond the boundaries of individual countries and acquiring an international character.

^{*} L. I. Brezhnev, *Report of the CPSU Central Committee and the Immediate Tasks of the Party in Home and Foreign Policy*, Moscow, 1976, p. 34.

The energy crisis of the 1970s showed that the relations of the imperialist states with countries that have started out on the road of independent development cannot be continued on the former basis. Shackling agreements, the sale of manufactured goods in the former colonies at exorbitant prices and the supply of cheap raw materials from these countries not only perpetuate backwardness but widen the gap in the economic levels of the industrialised and developing states. The struggle of the developing states against monopoly pillage is changing the established system of world economic relations. The policy of saving one's skin adopted by the industrialised states during the energy crisis has demonstrated how far the inter-imperialist contradictions have deepened.

The aggravation of all the internal contradictions of the imperialist countries and the growing conflict between the imperialist states themselves are leading to capitalism's political instability. A situation is arising in which every conflict becomes a link in a series of conflicts or problems, reflects their close interrelation and is mirrored in the economy, in politics and in ideology.

With the capitalist system's growing instability it is only natural that all strata of the population are increasingly striving for changes. The deep crisis that has hit the economy, policies and morals of all the capitalist countries leaves nobody indifferent. Changes are demanded by the working people, who suffer most from the effects of the crisis. The need for change is admitted by the social-reformist parties. It is acknowledged, albeit reluctantly, also by the bourgeoisie. There is perhaps no politician in any capitalist country, or a representative of monopoly capital, who, in counting on massive support, has not committed himself to a promise of fundamental social reforms.

At the 1974 presidential elections, the Gaullist party, which was in power in France for 16 years, promised to build a "new society". It was defeated because the people

wanted real changes, not promises. The fact that the Left-wing parties polled more than 49 per cent of the votes is evidence that half the electorate wants changes that will open the road to socialism. However, millions of people still believe the politicians promising "changes without risk", "reforms in a situation of tranquillity" and so on.

In many capitalist countries, the instability of the governments, which are compelled to rely on a small majority or even a minority in the parliaments, likewise mirrors the changes that have taken place in the mood of all strata of the population, who refuse to reconcile themselves to the difficulties springing from the existing social system.

Capitalism's general crisis has been progressing faster than ever before during the postwar period. The moribund system seeks salvation by intensifying the exploitation of the working people and by a further concentration of capital. Some segments of the bourgeoisie hope to secure political stability with the aid of some variant of fascism. But finding itself more and more helpless in face of the growing striving for change, reaction has recourse to conspiracies, military coups and dictatorial regimes in order to prevent inevitable democratic reforms by iron and blood.

The class struggle will inescapably continue to mount. The 1970s are witnessing an activation of the proletariat; the strike movement is more and more frequently going beyond purely economic demands; disaffection is growing among the peasants being ruined by the monopolies; and there is increasing unrest among the urban middle strata.

Realistic possibilities for putting fundamental social changes into effect are appearing in this situation, and it is no accident that the problem of the correlation between the objective and subjective factors of revolution has again come into prominence in the ideological struggle in the liberation movements.

The subjective is not the direct reflection of the objective, and no urgent economic requirement can be immediately and directly mirrored in the consciousness of the masses. Lenin wrote that "history does not move along a smooth and easy road, such as would imply that every historically ripe change means *ipso facto* that precisely the class which stands to profit most by it is mature and strong enough to carry this change into effect".*

The development of the productive forces is the objective foundation of social changes. But new social relations do not appear automatically, solely because the material conditions for them have ripened. An outworn system does not disappear by itself; it must be overthrown and destroyed. In this context great importance is acquired by the consciousness of the advanced class and its allies, by their readiness to help history to advance through their revolutionary struggle.

The Marxists believe that once revolutionary ideas capture the minds of people they become a material force that prompts organisation and purposeful action, in other words, given favourable conditions they are as important as mature objective conditions.

Small wonder, therefore, that the ideological struggle over the problem of political consciousness and the role played by it in social development has been waged throughout the history of Marxism. Essentially speaking, this is one of the fronts of the very same battles fought against the unchanging opponents of revolutionary Marxism—Right opportunism and anarchist Leftism—over the question of how the Party's leading role must be understood.

Right opportunism has undergone a considerable evolution in the course of the past decades. The vulgar, economic materialism underlying its method predetermined its refusal to recognise the transformative power that

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 17, p. 101.

can be acquired by consciousness. The simplified negation of the possibility of the political consciousness influencing the maturing of the objective conditions for social changes, and with it of the role of social practice and the class struggle in moulding consciousness, signifies an orientation on waiting for the gradual evolution of social being. It is asserted that the development of the productive forces itself changes consciousness. If the social being of capitalism were to develop in the direction of socialism, a socialist consciousness would automatically emerge.

The Right opportunists thus reduced the social activity of the advanced class to an aimless movement, to a struggle for day-to-day needs, a struggle that would supposedly itself facilitate social change.

Although there was a period when for some time, Right opportunism and its most consummate expression, social-reformism, postponed the possibility of building socialism to the remote and indefinite future, it did not deny that the socialist system was the end goal of the working class. Today the assessment of social consciousness solely as the direct reflection of social being has begun to be used to deny the socialist prospect. In the wake of the bourgeois ideologists, the social-reformists assert that capitalist development leads to the disappearance of the working class, to its conversion into a kind of "middle class". Consequently, the material foundation on which socialist consciousness is able to develop as a class consciousness also disappears. In keeping with this theory, one can without any qualms of conscience altogether renounce class, socialist ideology and in its stead accept vague notions about "democratic socialism" that allegedly mirrors modern capitalist society's deproletarianisation but is, in fact, oriented on class cooperation with big capital and on the denigration of living, real socialism.

The following is a typical example of reformist thinking. Robert. T. Hawke, head of the Australian Council of Trade Unions, wrote that people united in trade unions

were not ideologists and had their own idea of happiness. Since the conditions of their life could not be ignored, there was no reason for some people to regard themselves "as kings of philosophy and tell the population what aim must be achieved". What does he offer in lieu of an aim? The people must be given a higher salary and better housing. It does not mean that this is what we should confine ourselves to. We must be realists. Progress requires time and education.*

This is an eloquent example of how the present reformist world outlook can be expressed in a few words. The terms "working class" and "working people" have been dropped altogether. They have been replaced with the word "population", which is amorphous in the social sense. None should regard themselves as "kings of philosophy" and set any long-term aim of struggle. Today the task does not go beyond raising salaries and improving housing conditions. But this is only for today. Hawke refuses to admit that lofty ideals are alien to him. By no means! He is a realist and therefore sets his hopes on "time and education". Given time, everything will fall into place. Education, as seen by this reformist, means the self-emergence of a progressive world outlook.

Although the reader is assured that he is not addressed by a "king of philosophy", who sets himself ideological aims, one need not have keen insight to see that this "deideologisation" is only a blind for a definite ideology, for bourgeois ideology, for the ideology of conciliation with capitalist reality and the preaching of "small affairs".

The bourgeois ideologists themselves articulate their "philosophy of life" in simpler terms, without beating about the bush. The British sociologist Karl Popper says: "Work for the elimination of concrete evils rather than for the realisation of abstract goods. Do not aim at

* *Le Monde*, May 6, 1973, p. 3.

establishing happiness by political means. Rather aim at the elimination of concrete miseries.”*

The bourgeois and reformist ideologists expend no little effort to give credibility to their arguments that antagonistic classes will disappear under capitalism. In particular, they juggle with statistics on the levelling up of the living standard of the workers and that of some categories of intellectuals, on automation that allegedly reduces the workers’ alienation from production, and so on, in order to “remove” the very problem of the subjective factor.

On the eve of the Congress of the Socialist Party of Austria in 1972, the SPA mouthpiece carried a policy article assessing the situation in the country and in the Party and characterising the complex processes taking place in the world. It concluded with the words: “We are thus living in a world full of the reality of perplexing problems, and the question justifiably arises: What can the Party Congress do in face of this situation save to record our frustration?”**

It must not be thought that this refutation of the active possibilities of a political party is a specific of Social-Democracy in a small country that cannot affect global processes. That is not so. This attitude is propounded not only in Austria. Carl Landauer, a veteran Social-Democratic theorist, wrote a book, which in his opinion can serve as “the point of departure for a new understanding of the aims of Social-Democracy”. The entire book is devoted to negating the active role of the subjective factor. Landauer claims that it is impossible to put forward any aims for cardinal social changes and for the social struggle. Actually, he writes, there is nobody to fight. The problem of power, he asserts, has lost its class character

* Maurice Cornforth, *The Open Philosophy and the Open Society. A Reply to Dr. Karl Popper's Refutations of Marxism*, London, 1968, p. 222.

** *Die Zukunft*, January 1-2, 1972, p. 2.

long ago, while the very concept of power is extremely relative, because everything has been determined and does not depend on the will of people. To back up his fatalistic justification of passiveness, the esteemed Social-Democrat has recourse to the following infantile analogy: “When driving a car we have often had a sense of power despite the fact that traffic rules and the situation on the road in many ways influence our decisions. In other words, subjectively we get a sense of power even when actually our role consists of subordinating ourselves to necessity.”*

From this it follows that entrepreneurs only seem to wield power, when in fact they obey the dictates of the market. Appreciating that this idea entirely deprives Social-Democracy of any end objective, Landauer makes haste to console his readers that the “synthesis of belief in the need for positive social actions with the idea of individual freedom”** has come down intact from the old Social-Democratic programme.

Such is the sum total of the concept about the subjective factor: instead of action—the “synthesis of belief” that action is needed; instead of a struggle for the end objective—a dim idea about defending “individual freedoms”. As a matter of fact, Landauer himself admits that Social-Democracy “must formulate its aims more clearly”.

By and large, Right-wing Social-Democracy denies the efficacy of the subjective factor and does not set itself the aim of shaping and intensifying it.

Like the reformists, the Right revisionists make every effort to debunk the role of the conscious activity of people and the purpose of the vanguard Party. Ernst Fischer and Franz Marek argue that “the accentuation of the subjective factor is, it goes without saying, linked

* *Die Sozialdemokratie. Geschichtsabriss und Standortbestimmung von Carl Landauer*, Hamburg, 1972, p. 62.

** *Ibid.*, p. 99.

with Lenin's conclusions based on the conditions of the political struggle in Russia".*

Having turned the question of the Party of the new type into a purely Russian issue, the revisionists suggest more "modern" models of the make-up of parties that differ little from Social-Democratic parties, parties that would be not an active force fighting for socialism but organisations registering the processes of objective reality and oriented on the self-transformation of capitalism.

But the ideological struggle over the problem of the subjective factor is conducted not only on the Right wing. Under cover of "Leftist" verbiage it is voluntaristically interpreted by many proponents of "revolutionary impatience". The tone on this wing is set by the Trotskyists. They consider it beneath their "revolutionary" dignity to study the processes taking place in the capitalist economy and do not take the trouble even to consider the state of the mass movements, the readiness of the working people for the decisive battle.

For the Trotskyists the objective factor is virtually non-existent, while they narrow the subjective factor to the extent that not even revolutionary parties interest them. Everything is reduced to how these parties are led. This was proclaimed in the years when under the leadership of the Comintern the Communist parties of all countries fought the growing threat of fascism and formed united workers' and popular fronts. This was repeated by the Trotskyists during the Second World War, the anti-fascist Resistance and the national liberation revolutions that in many countries developed into socialist revolutions. They repeat this today as well. "What we are witnessing today," echo the Canadian Trotskyists, "is the reaffirmation of the main historical contradiction of our epoch,

* Ernst Fischer, Franz Marek, *Was Lenin wirklich Sagte*, Vienna, 1969, p. 29.

the crisis of revolutionary leadership."** Without taking the trouble to analyse the situation in their country, their neighbours, the US Trotskyists, categorically declare that in the USA everything is ready for revolution. The only thing wanting is revolutionary leadership. Variants of this universal claim may be found in Trotskyist publications in France, Britain, Japan and other countries.

All intricate contemporary problems are resolved simply. The key to socialism lies in the pocket of the leadership of the Communist parties, but that leadership, it is alleged, has sunk into revisionism. All it has to do is to insert the key into the lock, but it refuses to perform that simple operation.

This so-called concept makes unnecessary the complex obligation to see and understand the processes actually taking place in the world. By proclaiming that the crisis of revolutionary leadership is the substance of the modern crisis, the Trotskyists thereby lightheartedly replace the struggle against imperialism with the condemnation of those who, in their opinion, are inadequately fighting imperialism. By denigrating the Communist parties and the socialist countries and labelling them as non-revolutionary, one can raise one's own worth, in one's own eyes, as being the sole true revolutionary. Indeed, what else remains to these pseudo-revolutionaries? By forming their own "International" in 1938, the Trotskyists set themselves the pretentious aim of resolving "the crisis of revolutionary leadership".** They maintained that "the objective basis which supports us has never been more favourable to any other International in history".*** But even Isaac Deutscher, their well-wisher and an apologist

* *World Outlook. A Weekly International Supplement to the Militant*, May 25, 1973, p. 3.

** *Keep Left*, January 5, 1974, p. 5.

*** *European Marxist Review* No. 1, May 1968, p. 131.

of Trotsky, has had to admit that the "International" was an unhappy idea.*

Trotskyism aspires to prosper by its attacks on the Communist and Workers' parties, by paying compliments to the many varieties of pseudo-revolutionism claiming to be the revolutionary vanguard today.

At every exacerbation of the situation, the bankrupt prophets are prepared to remind people of their messianic claims. For many years the British Trotskyists have been declaring that the world is in the grip of a revolutionary situation. In 1968 they said people "must consciously prepare for sudden changes".** Six months later, in January 1969, they urged: "make 1969 a year of revolutionary decision"***. In January 1974 it was declared: "We see in the coming months the biggest-ever struggle in the history of the working class."**** All these exhortations are accompanied by the statement that the Trotskyists "will show the stuff they are made of" and that the Communists will find themselves "empty-handed".

In all its varieties Leftist radicalism does not take the trouble to consider the actual data on capitalism's social structure. The reasoning of some Leftists may give the impression that it is not class consciousness that springs from the condition of the class but, on the contrary, the level of consciousness determines class affiliation. In noting the attitude of the Lotta continua Leftist group in Italy, *Rinascita*, organ of the Italian Communist Party, wrote that as the Leftists saw it "today he becomes a proletarian who joins a group and supports its aims and forms of struggle". Another Leftist group, which calls itself Potere operaio, holds that people should be consid-

* Isaac Deutscher, *The Prophet Outcast. Trotsky: 1929-1940*, London, 1963, p. 429.

** *The Newsletter*, June 11, 1968, p. 2.

*** *The Newsletter*, January 11, 1969, p. 1.

**** *Keep Left*, January 5, 1974, p. 2.

ered "proletarians" "not by virtue of their class origin but by virtue of their ideology".*

The Leftists maintain that since today the working class is not as a whole and in all countries prepared to fight for direct socialist aims it has become bourgeoisified and lost its role as a mass revolutionary force. As for the revolutionary vanguard, it is inspired by socialist consciousness and is thereby justified in acting independently without taking the consciousness level of the masses into account.

In the 1960s, there was a multitude of modifications of the idealistic argument over the decisive role played by consciousness in remaking society.

For the Leftists the problem of the correlation between objective and subjective factors does not exist. Most of the Leftist groups are perfectly satisfied with aimless negativism. The main thing for them is to condemn the Marxist-Leninist revolutionary vanguard—everything else will take care of itself.

Herbert Marcuse, one of the many dons laying claim to the role of ideologists of rebellious young people, offers various "theories". In an article headed "Blue-Collar Revolution", carried by *The New York Times* on August 7, 1972, he writes that the coming revolutions will be quite different from their predecessors. While attaching special significance to this proposition, which has long been known to Marxists, he does not burden himself with answering the question he himself raised: What will the future revolutions be like? He is concerned mainly over what should be avoided. He is vehemently against the features of the Great October Socialist Revolution that are not of local but of fundamental importance and comprise the general law of socialist revolutions. He is opposed to such specifics of the October Revolution as the "leadership of the ideologically conscious vanguard", a mass Party

* *Rinascita* No. 8, 1972, pp. 19, 18.

as its "instrument", and the "struggle for state power" as the basic objective.

A large number of such denigrators of the revolutionary vanguard appeared on the scene in the late 1960s and early 1970s. Their wordy productions are filled not so much with ideas as with a nauseating laudation of spontaneity.

"In revolutionary situations," writes the West German "Left"-radical Professor Oscar Negt, "the solution of organisational issues comes of itself, is dictated by practical need, on the basis of spontaneous self-organisation of the masses."*

It is not surprising that all the attempts to depict the Marxist-Leninist propositions on the role of the revolutionary vanguard of the working class fighting for the overthrow of capitalism as obsolete are so cordially welcomed by bourgeois politicians and the propaganda apparatus serving them.

Matters have reached a stage where even a new variety of "legal Marxists" has appeared. Eminently respectable bourgeois dons and sociologists have begun to pose as "admirers" and "interpreters" of Marxism in an effort to toss their "discoveries" into the ranks of the Communist parties. The bourgeois Professor Jean Barrot, who has also joined in the attempts to "resolve" the problem of the revolutionary vanguard, preaches: "Some people ask: Should the Party lead the proletariat and head the revolution? Some reply in the affirmative. Others say: On no account. The following is an example of how the problem is incorrectly formulated.... Many groups that can form into Communist parties appear on the eve of a revolution or at the height of revolutionary action. In this sense it is the revolution that organises the Party and

* Für eine neue sozialistische Linke. Analysen, Strategien, Modelle, Herausgegeben vom Sozialistischen Büro, Frankfurt on the Main, 1973, p. 217.

not the other way round.... In any case, on the eve of a decisive battle one cannot know beforehand whether there will or will not be a Party to provide leadership; as a matter of fact this is a side issue."*

Although this pundit casually says that the question of "whether there will or will not be a Party to provide leadership" is a "side issue", this is nothing less than putting a good face on the matter. Does he not make himself look ludicrous with this assertion? As a matter of fact, the same situation is created for themselves by many other anti-communists, who use up buckets of ink to prove the weakness of the communist movement or that, generally, it is altogether non-existent. The French bourgeois newspaper *Nation* is incomparably more blunt: it urges a broad campaign for the "demystification" of Marxism. Attacks on the Marxist-Leninist teaching on the Party are part and parcel of that campaign.

With capitalism's general crisis growing ever deeper, the question of the revolutionary vanguard, its make-up, principles and type is becoming increasingly acute, and the Marxist-Leninist parties are resolutely repulsing all attempts to undermine their principles and foundations, whatever the source of these attempts.

The present situation, they say, devolves a greater responsibility on them, and they strive to raise their struggle to the level required by present-day tasks. Rodney Arismendi, First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Uruguay, writes that in Latin America "the problems of the unity of the people, of the subjective factors and, in particular, of the Party are daily evolving into the cardinal questions of the victory of the revolution".** Depending on the situation and the poten-

* Jean Barrot, *Le mouvement communiste (essai de définition)*, Paris, 1972, pp. 131-32.

** Rodney Arismendi, *Lenin, the Revolution and Latin America*, Moscow, 1973, pp. 540-50 (Russian translation).

tialities of the Party, these problems have their own specifics in the different countries, but they have arisen everywhere.

The question of strengthening the Communist parties is becoming more and more pressing in the industrialised capitalist countries as well. In the resolution passed at the 21st Extraordinary Congress of the French Communist Party (October 1974) it is stated that a more influential Communist Party is the most dependable guarantee of the future of the working people. Its existence, strength and work are needed to extricate the country from the crisis and ensure its democratic renewal. "It is in the interests of the workers and the people, in the interests of the nation itself that the Communist Party should extend and reinforce its influence, organisation and work."^{*}

The struggle is becoming more complex and new tasks are confronting the Communist parties. Their role is determined not only by what solutions they offer for modern society's basic problems and by the answers they give to the demands and aspirations of the working people, but also by their ability to organise the mass struggle, by their ability to be a far-sighted and resolute vanguard pursuing a policy combining flexibility and a principled attitude.

The Communists do not consider that every economic crisis inevitably erupts into a revolutionary crisis. Similarly, they do not hold that crises and depressions are accompanied by a decline of the class struggle, for the proletariat may lose more than it can gain. The opportunists assert that when unemployment rises demands are inescapably more docile. (As a matter of fact, they contend that in periods of economic upsurges it is possible to secure various concessions without an aggravation of the class struggle.)

^{*} *Cahiers du communisme*, November 1974, p. 121.

Actually, the correlation between the objective and subjective is much more complicated, and Lenin categorically opposed simplifications of this intricate question. In 1908 he wrote: "Undoubtedly the detailed study of the industrial crisis is of the greatest importance. But it is also beyond doubt that no data about the crisis, even if they were ideally accurate, can in reality decide the question of whether a rise of the revolutionary tide is at hand or not: because such a rise depends on a thousand additional factors which it is impossible to measure beforehand."^{*} He noted that even when there was general soil for a political crisis it was still not enough grounds for concluding whether the depression would for some time hold up the mass struggle or whether at a certain stage of the events *the same* depression would draw more people and new forces into the political struggle. But when objective conditions of a crisis exist, even the smallest conflicts, that are seemingly the most remote from the real centre of the revolution, may be crucial as the last straw, as the beginning of a turn in popular feeling, and so on.

Hence Lenin's conclusion that for the revolutionary vanguard there can be only one way, namely, closely watching the pulse of the country's entire political life and, in particular, the state of the movement and the feeling of the broad proletarian masses. He believed that "a firm party line, its unyielding resolve, is *also* a mood-creating factor, particularly at the sharpest revolutionary moments"^{**}.

A numerical growth and a rise of the importance of various organisations uniting large segments of working people are to be observed today in many countries. The trade unions, whose membership consists not only and not chiefly of workers, as was formerly the case, but also of employees of private and state enterprises, and peasants,

^{*} V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 15, p. 278.

^{**} *Ibid.*, Vol. 26, p. 209.

are exercising a substantial influence on politics. Electors and participants in various referendums are in many countries becoming more active, or one observes "reverse activity", when refusal to take part in elections likewise acquires the character of a political protest. When the political situation deteriorates, innumerable independent organisations spring up that act energetically and rely on support from the people. The Communist Party does not merely take the objective situation into account: it actively strives to turn the mood of the masses into an effective force capable of meeting the pressing requirements for social change. Special significance attaches today to Lenin's criticism of those who "disparage the materialist conception of history by ignoring the active, leading, and guiding part which can and must be played in history by parties that have realised the material prerequisites of a revolution and have placed themselves at the head of the progressive classes".*

Moreover, the role played by the communist movement also grows in connection with the processes taking place in the developing countries, especially in those which have no Marxist-Leninist parties. The modern national liberation revolutions have set in motion huge masses of peasants, petty bourgeoisie and the middle strata. Having united heterogeneous social forces, the anti-imperialist struggle has led to the creation of revolutionary-democratic parties that play a progressive role in the development of their peoples.

These parties came into being in a situation witnessing a weak class differentiation of the population of the liberated countries, the absence or only the emergence of a proletariat. In some of these countries they have acquired the character of broad national fronts uniting almost the entire population. Their motley social composition and the various ideological influences and traditional patriar-

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 9, p. 44.

chal notions engender fantastic combinations of the most conflicting views—from Marxist to religious—in one and the same organisation.

The development of these organisations cannot escape being affected by the class differentiation of the population, the growth of the working class and the evolution of the national liberation struggle into a social struggle. The history of liberation movements knows of instances when with the aid of the Communist parties revolutionary-democratic organisations gradually turned into Marxist-Leninist vanguards. The history of the development of the Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party from a purely peasant organisation into a Marxist-Leninist Party of the working class and the working peasants is an eloquent example of what results are achieved by consistent non-capitalist development and a close alliance with the socialist system and the international communist movement.

The Congolese Party of Labour (PCT) declares its fidelity to Marxism-Leninism. Its programme says that the PCT "must become the class Party and vanguard of the Congolese working class". A Party school functions in the country. The PCT does not hurry to increase its membership, but conducts extensive work in the various mass organisations, which it regards as "parallel Party organs". There is an ideological struggle in mass organisations, among revolutionary activists, even among Party members, on practical issues, and many problems are decided in the course of discussion.

In the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen the National Liberation Front is gradually turning into a vanguard party. As soon as the country's independence was achieved, the National Front proclaimed that it regarded scientific, revolutionary socialist theory as its compass. Much is being done to educate the masses politically, and there is now a Party school giving cadres a Marxist-Leninist education.

Guided by scientific revolutionary theory, the leaders of the revolutionary-democratic parties that have adopted the course of gradually converting themselves into vanguard organisations, are aware how difficult this process is and how important it is to strengthen the Party's unity, improve its social composition and prevent the infiltration of alien elements into its ranks.

The revolutionary-democratic parties are developing not in a vacuum but in a world held in the grip of an acute ideological struggle, where there are many claimants to the role of "friends of the liberated people" and grinding out dangerous advice to and assessments of the national liberation movement. In some countries of Tropical Africa the ultra-Left elements among the revolutionary-democratic forces are urging the establishment of proletarian dictatorships and the immediate transition to socialist construction.

Lately, the Socialist International, which had been indifferent to the problems of the colonial countries, has been seeking to influence the revolutionary-democratic parties and orient them on conversion into reformist organisations.

The incipient national bourgeoisie, the bureaucratic elements and internal reactionary forces of all stripes are receiving considerable assistance from the imperialist powers, which are sparing no effort to maintain their influence in the developing states, including socialist-oriented countries, in the calculation of bringing them back into the fold of bourgeois development.

The revolutionary-democratic parties are interim parties. They may become Marxist-Leninist, but the possibility of their becoming reformist or bourgeois-nationalist is not to be ruled out. It may be said that the question of the Party, of its character and orientation of further development, is an area where demarcation in revolutionary democracy manifests itself most strikingly. This clearly shows the great responsibility borne by the Com-

munist parties and the entire international communist movement in helping the revolutionary-democratic parties of the liberated countries to choose their road of development. Opposition to the attempts to undermine the Marxist-Leninist principles of the Communist parties will have a positive effect also on the evolution of the revolutionary-democratic organisations into vanguard parties of the Marxist-Leninist type.

The problems arising throughout the non-socialist world, in both industrialised capitalist and developing countries, thus accentuate the role of the subjective factor and render acute everything linked with the make-up and character of the Communist parties, with their devotion to their fundamental principles.

2. PEACEFUL COEXISTENCE AND REVOLUTIONARY POSSIBILITIES

For more than a quarter of a century after the Great October Socialist Revolution the international communist movement developed either in wartime conditions or under a continued threat of another world war. In its address "To the Workers of the World" the First Comintern Congress (March 1919) expressed admiration of the Soviet people, who, despite their ardent desire for peace, were courageously and staunchly fighting the internal counter-revolution and the imperialist intervention. A striving for peace and the compulsion to reckon with the grave threat of war constantly affected the work of the Communist parties of all countries.

The defeat of the imperialist intervention against the Soviet Republic and the rout of the counter-revolution, which had powerful outside support, did not in principle remove the problem of war and peace. In May 1922, Lenin wrote that self-deceit would be of the greatest harm to revolutionaries. Although Bolshevism *had become*

an international force, "nonetheless, for the time being, the international bourgeoisie still remains incomparably stronger than its class enemy. This bourgeoisie, which has done everything in its power to hamper the birth of proletarian power in Russia and to multiply tenfold the dangers and suffering attending its birth, is still in a position to condemn millions and tens of millions to torment and death through its whiteguard and imperialist wars, etc. That is something we must not forget".*

The possibility of preventing or at least postponing the fomenting of war by the imperialist states depends largely on the scale and militancy of the working-class movement, while following the breaking through of the imperialist system this depends also on the economic and defence potential of the emergent new, socialist society.

In the early 1920s, Soviet Russia had only about one per cent of the world's industrial output. In 1928, with the restoration of the war-ravaged economy, it became possible to reach the 1913 level, when Russia's share of the world's industrial output amounted to somewhat over 4 per cent.** But during that period the capitalist world had advanced.

On the eve of the First Five-Year Plan the Sixth Congress of the Comintern (1928) rejected as silly calumny the charge that the Communists wanted imperialist wars in order to speed up the revolution, and declared that "although convinced that war is inevitable under the rule of the bourgeoisie, the Communists, in the interests of the masses of the workers and of all the toilers who bear the brunt of the sacrifice entailed by war, wage a persistent fight against imperialist war..."***

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 33, p. 352.

** *Soviet National Economy in 1972. Statistics*, Moscow, 1973, p. 84 (in Russian).

*** *The Struggle Against Imperialist War and the Tasks of the Communists. Resolution of the 11th World Congress of the Communist International, July-August, 1928*, New York, 1932, p. 12.

Although the threat of war loomed larger than ever when fascism came to power in Germany, the Seventh Comintern Congress made the first-ever statement in the history of the international communist movement to the effect that the "Communists must renounce the fatalistic belief that it is impossible to prevent war, that it is senseless to fight the preparations for war".* In the resolution passed at that congress it was stated that thanks to its growing might the Soviet Union was in a position to avert the attack already prepared by the imperialist powers and their vassals and pursue a consistent policy of peace in face of all the warmongers. The Soviet Union had become the centre of attraction of all the peace-loving working people in the capitalist and colonial countries.**

But the peace forces did not prove strong enough to prevent another world war. The Soviet Union's share of the world's industrial product was less than 10 per cent in 1937. However, due to the economic and military potential built up during the initial five-year plan periods and the advantages of the socialist system, the Soviet Union not only repulsed the attack of German fascism, nourished by world imperialism, but made the decisive contribution to the utter defeat of Hitlerism, liberating many of the countries that had been enslaved by it. The alignment of class forces in the planet underwent a cardinal change as a result of the Second World War. The Soviet Union was no longer the only socialist country. The colonial system, which had for centuries enriched a handful of capitalist states and kept much of mankind in a state of destitution and oppression, crumbled.

In 1957, the socialist countries were accounting for approximately 30 per cent of the world's industrial out-

* D. Z. Manuilsky, *Results of Socialist Construction in the USSR*, Moscow, 1935, p. 57 (in Russian).

** *Seventh World Congress of the Communist International. Resolutions and Decisions*, Moscow-Leningrad, 1935, p. 39 (in Russian).

put. The international communist movement and all the anti-imperialist forces grew considerably compared with the prewar period.

The new balance of strength between the two opposing systems on the world scene enabled the international communist movement to draw the conclusion that the soil for wars of aggression would remain so long as imperialism existed, but "at present the peace forces have grown to the extent that there is a real possibility for averting war". In the Declaration of the 1957 Meeting of Representatives of the Communist and Workers' Parties of the Socialist Countries, to which the Communist parties in capitalist and developing countries subscribed, it is stated that the "Communist parties regard the struggle for peace as their foremost task. Together with all the peace-loving forces, they will do their best to prevent war".*

The changed balance of strength in the world and the diminution of imperialism's positions have opened up far-reaching possibilities for the world revolutionary movement, for the elaboration of various forms of the transition of different countries from capitalism to socialism, for the creation of broad anti-imperialist alliances, for drawing the struggle for democracy and peace closer to the struggle for socialism, in other words, these factors have determined those aspects of the strategy and tactics of the Communist parties that require the closest attention in the new epoch.

As understood by the Communists peace benefits all mankind. The struggle against the threat of a world war is a struggle for life. On the success of this struggle depend all the social rights that may be won by the working people from the exploiters. For that reason the communist movement invariably comes forward as the bearer of the banner of peace.

* *The Struggle for Peace, Democracy and Socialism*, Moscow, 1963, p. 11.

The communist movement regards peaceful coexistence between the two social systems as a form of the class struggle on the international scene; it believes that the fight for peace will be a long one and that in it the decisive role will be played by the growing might of the socialist community. The destiny of peace depends in many ways on the militancy of the working-class movement in the capitalist countries and its alliances with other democratic forces, on the national liberation movements and on the countries pursuing a policy of peace.

But the Communists are under no illusions about imperialism's aggressive nature. Global peaceful coexistence between the two systems with different class foundations does not signify that there can be peaceful coexistence between antagonistic classes in the capitalist countries or a relaxation of the class struggle, and, as a consequence, the exclusion of the need for a militant revolutionary vanguard.

In wartime or when the war threat from imperialism grows acute, the sources that can sow illusions about that sinister social system are relatively small. Imperialism's aggressive character is then seen quite plainly. But in peace-time people may slip into forgetfulness of imperialism's rapaciousness.

The changes that have taken place in the world as a result of World War II have created the foundation in some Communist parties for the misconception that the class struggle is on the wane and that the political climate has altered to the extent where the revolutionary vanguard is no longer needed. At the close of the war, Earl Browder, then General Secretary of the Communist Party of the USA, asserted that the Soviet Union's participation, along with the capitalist states, in the anti-Hitlerite coalition signified the disappearance of the class struggle on the world scene and created the prerequisite for a relaxation of the class contradictions in the capitalist countries. Relative to the USA he wrote that the "Communists

will, therefore, dissolve their separate political party, and find a new and different organisational form and name".*

In 1944, he secured the self-dissolution of the Communist Party and the formation in its stead of a new organisation, a political association, whose rules stated that it was an uncommitted organisation of Americans.** Reaching the height of cynicism, Browder ventured to state: "...we, Americans who are proud to consider ourselves disciples of Lenin, are in practice collaborating with capital, and fiercely denounce those who advocate a class war against capital in the United States today."***

It took a huge effort and considerable time to put an end to liquidationism and restore the Communist Party of the USA. But subsequently, too, the American Communists had to wage a struggle against those who, referring to the new international situation, pressed for the reorganisation of the Communist Party into "a non-party organisation of political action".

In 1956, John Gates, who headed the protagonists of the Communist Party's dissolution, declared that "this new era ... requires that we build a Party of a new type". The meaning he put into these words was opposite to what the "Party of the new type" actually represented. Gates, too, based his arguments on peaceful coexistence. He maintained that "we have entered into a protracted period of peaceful competition during which the struggle in our country will be of an evolutionary character.... We need a party geared to that kind of situation".****

Gates and his supporters were expelled from the Communist Party of the USA. But in some other Communist parties, too, there appeared exponents of liquidationism, who sought to justify their attitude with the argument

* Earl Browder, *Teheran. Our Path in War and Peace*, New York, 1944, p. 117.

** *The Communist* No. 6, June 6, 1944, p. 499.

*** *Political Affairs*, January 1945, p. 3.

**** *Political Affairs*, November 1956, p. 49.

that the Communist parties were fighting for peaceful coexistence between the two social systems and that this was giving rise to the prospect for relaxing class conflicts. The revisionists wanted the Communist parties to renounce their militancy as revolutionary vanguards and turn into parties "like all the others", fitting perfectly into the bourgeois notions about the purpose of political parties.

At the height of the cold war started by imperialism soon after the Second World War ended the assertion that social contradictions had relaxed would have been glaringly at variance with the actual situation. But with the failure of the cold war policy, especially in countries that increasingly desired cooperation with the socialist world, there was a resurgence of the revisionist intention to modify the character of the Communist Party. This mood was everywhere enthusiastically backed by the bourgeoisie. What Lenin once called the bourgeois manner "of killing unsteady socialists with kindness"* could, given certain conditions, become widespread.

In adapting itself to peaceful coexistence capitalism looks for new ways of fighting the working class and its revolutionary vanguard. Instructive in this context are the processes that took place in Finland, which embarked upon peaceful coexistence with the Soviet Union earlier than any other capitalist country. The climate for the Communist Party of Finland, which had been persecuted for years on end, changed for the better in the 1960s. However, steps were taken with the purpose of integrating the Communist Party into the state-monopoly capitalist system and remoulding its revolutionary make-up.

A pronouncement made in 1966 by Mauno Koivisto, a leader of the Social-Democratic Party of Finland, is characteristic in this respect. After recalling that in the postwar years he had steadfastly pursued a policy of

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 20, p. 255.

struggle against the Communists and declaring that he still considered that this policy had to remain as hard as ever, he said that a situation had to be created in which "our local Communists could in practice, within the framework of our system, adapt themselves to a struggle for the satisfaction of the day-to-day requirements of their supporters",* in which their policy would not be distinguished by sharpness and would not exclude the possibility of cooperating with them.

In postwar Finnish political circles it was remembered that in the 1930s the Social-Democratic Party had been permitted to enter the government and that now there were few Finns who would question the correctness and need for that decision, which had been violently opposed at the time. With references to that experience, it was declared that trust shown for a group that had been discriminated against evoked attachment and trust in return. This example from history was cited in order to draw an analogy between the Social-Democrats and the Communists and offer the Communist Party participation in the government provided it abided by the accepted "rules of the game". The Communists accepted posts in the government, but soon had to resign because the bourgeois "rules of the game" turned out to mean a commitment to pursue a policy prejudicing the interests of the working class.

The new forms of pressure applied by the bourgeoisie and the Social-Democrats on the Communist Party of Finland did not pass without leaving a trace. Right-opportunist trends grew stronger in some of its organisations. This is an example of how the ruling bourgeoisie and the reformists seek to use peaceful coexistence on the international scene to spread the idea that classes within a country can coexist peacefully.

The French Communist Party had drawn conclusions from the fact that the ruling forces do not conceal their

* Mauno Koivisto, *Linjan vetoa*, Helsinki, 1968, p. 31.

intention and hope of "compelling the FCP to become a party like all the others ... which is tantamount to compelling it to disappear as a Marxist-Leninist Party, a Party of the new type".*

Thus, while creating new possibilities for stepping up the revolutionary struggle, the new international situation may, at the same time, reanimate the Right-revisionist aspirations regarding the character of the proletariat's militant vanguard. In the proposals for discussion drawn up by the *World Marxist Review* on the question of peaceful coexistence and the class struggle it is stated that it would "be wrong to underestimate the danger of opportunist distortions of peaceful coexistence in the present world situation".**

Peaceful coexistence is not an idyll, as the Right revisionists would like to portray it, and it is not an armistice in the class struggle. It spells out a change of the forms of that struggle on the international scene and the emergence of new conditions for the development of the class struggle in the capitalist countries and for the further successes of the working people in that struggle.

Moreover, the international situation creates conditions for the resurrection of all sorts of Leftist ideas. In a world torn by contradictions, a world where disaffection with state-monopoly capitalist oppression is mounting, there is no dearth of elements who, while as yet having no political experience or a clear ideology, burn with hatred of oppressors and are impatient and prepared to put an end to injustice at one stroke, at any cost. It seems to them that a world war is exactly the means that can resolve all of mankind's urgent problems. As they see it, peaceful coexistence between the two social systems slows down the revolutionary process, consolidates the status quo and is incompatible with a true revolutionary spirit.

* *Cahiers du communisme*, February 1968, p. 117.

** *World Marxist Review*, March 1974, p. 19.

The words "war is the mother of revolution", coined by Trotsky long ago, are quoted by all ultra-revolutionaries who want action but do not know where to apply their strength. G. Posadas, the most vociferous of the Latin American Trotskyists, who vigorously opposed the ceasefire in Vietnam, "demanded": "...the Soviets must make an appeal and a warning to the American masses and bomb the factories of the United States, destroy all the factories, the places of concentration of atomic arms, the steel factories, the arms factories. To say to the American masses: 'We will put all this back rapidly afterwards. But we want to destroy the power of military action of a small Yankee clique which acts in a way foreign to all human sentiments, and which goes towards capitalist madness.'"^{*} In the USA the Trotskyists do not call upon the Soviet Union to drop nuclear bombs on their country, but, in their view, the whole idea of peaceful coexistence "is nothing but a betrayal of the world revolutionary movement". In an extreme case they are prepared to recognise "peaceful coexistence as a temporary armistice", maintaining that "the road to socialism is through war". Hyman Lumer, editor of *Political Affairs*, journal of the Communist Party of the USA, called these pronouncements the "Left" voice of reaction.^{**}

Hirokazu Kuroda, author of *Peace and Revolution in Our Epoch*, which has become a sort of bible of the Japanese Trotskyists, writes that peaceful coexistence must be denounced just as the "opportunist theory of the Second International" was denounced.

The preaching that war should not be feared came from anarchist circles, terrorist groups and various Leftist organisations that believe that social contradictions can only be settled by another world war and that the true revolutionary welcomes war and orients his activities on it.

* *Red Flag*, May 4, 1972, p. 3.

** *Political Affairs*, June 1972, pp. 32, 33.

The ideological struggle centres round the question of the character of the present epoch and the political conclusions drawn from the ensuing assessments. These conclusions also directly concern what the revolutionary vanguard should be like today.

In their calls for the formation of "new vanguard parties", all the pseudo-revolutionary trends maintain that a true vanguard scorns democratic freedoms and bourgeois legality, is oriented on whipping up international tension and does everything in its power to create explosive situations.

The struggle against the Right-revisionist and Leftist ideas about the Party was important not only because it allowed orienting the communist movement correctly. To some extent it anticipated many of the problems that faced the revolutionary forces when tangible advances were made by the policy of peaceful coexistence.

A new situation has been created in the world by the consistent foreign policy pursued by the Soviet Union and the other socialist countries. This policy relies on their growing economic and military potential, on the active assistance rendered by the socialist countries to all revolutionary and national liberation movements, assistance that played a large part in the successful struggle against imperialism; and on the achievements of the international working class and all the peace forces. Peaceful coexistence, once only an idea over which a struggle was waged with alternate success for many decades, is now becoming reality.

The Communist Party of the Soviet Union unswervingly and patiently pursued a revolutionary policy of peace, and opportunely saw the moment when a decisive turning point could be achieved in that struggle. The Peace Programme adopted by the 24th Congress of the CPSU in 1971 was wholeheartedly welcomed by progressives throughout the world. The days when the Soviet Union's peace initiatives were depicted in the capitalist countries

as propaganda have gone. "Facts have borne out the Programme's timeliness and realism," Leonid Brezhnev said at the 25th Congress of the CPSU. "And though world peace is by no means guaranteed as yet, we have every reason to declare that the improvement of the international climate is convincing evidence that lasting peace is not merely a good intention, but an entirely realistic objective. And we can and must continue to work tirelessly in the name of achieving it!"* To supplement and reinforce the Peace Programme the Congress adopted the Programme of Further Struggle for Peace and International Cooperation, for the Freedom and Independence of Peoples.

The profound changes that have taken place on the international scene in recent years have led to a turn from the policy of cold war, confrontation and tension pursued by many capitalist countries, notably the USA, to recognition of the principles of peaceful coexistence as a norm of relations between countries with different social systems.

This turn has yet to be made irreversible. Its consolidation is obstructed by innumerable hostile forces entrenched in strong positions in the capitalist world. Nevertheless, the transition from cold war to cooperation signifies more than an improvement of the international climate. It mirrors the objective processes of mankind's development, and for that reason the changes will inevitably deepen, despite all the zigzags, setbacks and difficulties.

Jointly with the other socialist countries, the Soviet Union has embarked upon a series of new initiatives with the purpose of furthering detente, expanding equal and mutually beneficial cooperation between states with different social systems and uniting all the forces of progress and peace against imperialist aggression and reaction,

* L. I. Brezhnev, *Report of the CPSU Central Committee and the Immediate Tasks of the Party in Home and Foreign Policy*, p. 21.

for the struggle for lasting peace and security for all nations.

The Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe, which ended in August 1975 with the summit signing of the Final Act, was a noteworthy contribution to detente. "We are convinced," Leonid Brezhnev said at the Conference, "that the successful implementation of what we have agreed upon here not only will have a beneficial effect on the life of the European peoples, but will also become an important contribution to the cause of strengthening world peace."**

The Communists unshakably believe that the productive forces are developing in a direction helping to remove wars from the life of mankind. We are entering an epoch, which Lenin foresaw when in 1918 he spoke of the growth of the destructive power of armaments: "But a time will come when war will be so destructive that it will be out of the question entirely."***

However, this objective process does not deflate the struggle for peace waged by progressives; on the contrary, it adds to the significance of that struggle and, at the same time, increasingly makes it a tangible force, for from whatever positions it is conducted it is sustained by history.

At the 11th Congress of the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party in March 1975, Leonid Brezhnev said: "Comrades, we cannot, of course, rest on our laurels. Detente, the strengthening of peace, is a process which must go on continuously. To stop somewhere along the road would endanger also those gains that have been made. The more so, that now, in the acute crisis of the capitalist system, the enemies of detente, those who support the arms race and the cold war are becoming more active. These forces,

* L. I. Brezhnev, *Following Lenin's Course*, Moscow, 1975, pp. 582-83.

** N. K. Krupskaya, *On Lenin*, Moscow, 1960, pp. 40-41 (in Russian).

hostile to the interests of the people, have not laid down their arms. They are obstinately seeking to reverse the course of international development. Therefore, fighters for peace should not slacken their vigilance, should effectively resist the designs of the enemies of peace, should never lose sight of the new objectives and always think of expanding the horizons of the policy of peace".*

In the West there are many elements who depict imperialism's forced change of policy as almost an act of good will, as a favour to the world. But why had that not entered the heads of the imperialists for more than half a century, despite the fact that the Soviet Union's hand offering peaceful coexistence had always been extended? These are the very people, to use the words of Albert Camus, who would like to "combine the merits of a good memory with the convenience of forgetfulness".**

The changes taking place in the world do not, of course, give any grounds for relaxing vigilance. The imperialists have not shed their nature, but they have to accommodate themselves to the new world balance of power. The international class struggle is in no way dying down; only its forms are undergoing a modification. In the world today there still are many flashpoints threatening peace.

How is the changed situation in the world affecting the development of the revolutionary process? Most of the Communist parties believe that these changes are opening up new possibilities for the struggle for democracy and socialism. In the decisions of the congresses of many Communist parties, held between 1973 and 1975, and also in other Party documents it is stated that peaceful coexistence between countries with different social systems and the easing of international tension are creating favourable conditions for the struggle of the working class against capi-

* L. I. Brezhnev, *Following Lenin's Course*, Moscow, 1975, p. 546.

** Albert Camus, *L'exil et le royaume*, Paris, 1966, p. 108.

talism, for enlisting into this struggle the broadest strata objectively interested in restructuring the economic and social system. Reaction has always made extensive use of international tension and the imagined "threat from the East" for assaults on democracy. Relaxation is helping to establish cooperation between Communists, Socialists and other democratic forces. It is facilitating the struggle for the vital rights of the working people and for a reduction of armed forces, and reaction is finding it more and more difficult to conduct anti-communist agitation.

In the Declaration of the Brussels Conference of Communist and Workers' Parties of European Capitalist Countries (January 1974) it is stated: "The results achieved thanks to peaceful coexistence are by no means attenuating the struggle against big capital and imperialism; on the contrary, they are giving the workers and all the peoples better conditions for a more tenacious class struggle in each country and on the international level, strengthening and extending their joint actions and promoting their reciprocal solidarity in the struggle for peace, freedom, independence, progress and socialism."*

Other assessments are also offered in the international communist movement. At the 12th Congress of the Communist Party of Japan (November 1973), in spite of the facts, it was declared that peaceful coexistence was making it easier for US imperialism to pursue its policy of aggression.**

At the close of 1973 *Nuestra bandera*, the theoretical journal of the Communist Party of Spain, carried an article asserting that peaceful coexistence was consolidating the socio-political status quo in the world.***

The facts refute these assessments. Peaceful coexistence is clearing the way for the struggle of the proletariat and

* *Cahiers du communisme*, March 1974, p. 133.

** *Partiinaya zhizn* No. 10, 1974, p. 55.

*** *Partiinaya zhizn* No. 4, 1974, p. 56.

other working people in each country and throughout the world.

In April 1974 the people and the Armed Forces Movement in Portugal put an end to one of the oldest fascist dictatorships. The fascist military regime in Greece collapsed. A powerful movement for democratic transformations unfolded in Spain, and those Spanish Communists, who held a negative view of the effects of detente, reconsidered their attitude.

In a communique on a meeting between delegations of the CPSU and the Communist Party of Spain in October 1974 it is stated: "The two parties are of the opinion that the implementation of the principle of peaceful coexistence does not signify either the preservation of the social and political status quo or a relaxation of the ideological struggle, that instead of slowing down the class struggle and the work of the Communist parties in the capitalist countries it is creating more favourable conditions for them."^{*}

The new revolutionary possibilities being opened by peaceful coexistence are enhancing the responsibility of the Communist parties and demanding they display more initiative and vigilance.

The Communists believe that a major result of detente for the liberation movements is that imperialism is no longer in a position to interfere in the affairs of other countries by the methods it had been employing only recently. The situation today does not allow the imperialists to wave a "big stick" and openly export counter-revolution; they have to have recourse mainly to clandestine subversion. Direct military interference, such as was undertaken against Guatemala and the Dominican Republic, is more and more frequently being replaced with covert methods of fighting the revolutionary forces.

This makes it imperative for the communist movement

^{*} *Pravda*, October 16, 1974.

and all democratic forces to show greater vigilance relative to subversion and conspiracies and invigorate their struggle against the activation of neofascism. The tragic events in Chile acquired enormous international significance. They were a grim warning. The exposure of the role played by the US Central Intelligence Agency in planning the fascist coup in Chile, and not only in that country, is evidence that imperialism has by no means abandoned its attempts to shake the positions of the forces of democracy and progress. All progressive parties are drawing a lesson from these sinister facts.

One cannot fail to see that some new problems and difficulties are accompanying the new possibilities appearing in the present situation. Today the class struggle is spreading to new spheres. For instance, foreign policy, which was usually regarded as an affair solely of governments, is now becoming an area of acute class collisions. In the capitalist countries the people are increasingly feeling that their condition depends on the international situation, on the foreign policy of their governments. It is indicative that never before have questions of foreign policy been debated so frequently and in such volume at plenary meetings of the central committees of Communist parties as in recent years. Today these are no longer "introductions" to home policy reports but independent questions in which a profound analysis is made of the international positions of given countries and the ways and means of influencing foreign policy are charted in order to facilitate the deepening of detente. The international factor is acquiring growing importance in the work of the Communist parties.

The communist movement has become a great force in the world and plays a steadily growing international role. That fact that what is happening in each country is linked with the processes embracing the entire planet signifies that as consistent patriots the Communists cannot ignore their increasing internationalist responsibility for the destinies of the world.

The communist movement is aware that in the capitalist countries there are many elements opposed to any change. The professional military, the armaments monopolies and the politicians blinded by their hatred of social progress and having learned nothing from their defeats have not abandoned the hope of destroying detente. For that reason the Communists consider that it would be as gross a mistake to underrate the historical significance of the present turn from the cold war to peace as to consider detente irreversible.

Detente diminishes the threat of a devastating nuclear war. This alone means much to mankind. But in everything else the struggle between the two systems continues in the political, economic and ideological spheres, and this struggle cannot fail to acquire new forms. Those elements in the capitalist world who are opposing detente and clinging to the outworn "positions-of-strength" theory refuse to give up even their old methods of ideological warfare. While hypocritically insisting on so-called free exchanges of ideas, the bourgeoisie mortally fears the spread of socialist ideas. Today there is incomparably less talk about "deideologisation", which only a few years ago the bourgeois and reformist parties hoped to use as a means of preventing socialist ideology from reaching the people. Even the frank anti-communists acknowledge that modern capitalism is "creating a strange intellectual vacuum", which obliges "those who share definite philosophical conceptions" to act with greater vigour. The reformist leaders, who only recently exhorted their rank and file to "pay less attention to philosophy", admit that a fearful "lack of ideological principles" is to be observed in society, while "politicians must already today find the answers to questions that will be asked tomorrow".

In this situation the ideological clarity in the attitude of the Communists, their uncompromising stand relative to Right opportunism and all forms of Leftism, acquire increasing importance. The question of the leading role

of the Communist Party has always been a key issue in the revolutionary movement. "Today," it was noted in the Report of the Central Committee to the 24th Congress of the CPSU, "it has become the pivot of the struggle between Marxists-Leninists and representatives of various forms of revisionism."*

* 24th Congress of the CPSU, Moscow, 1971, p. 122.

NEW ROOTS OF OLD DEVIATIONS

Never before in history have the most diverse social strata and entire nations participated on such a large scale in the social struggle as in the present epoch of transition from capitalism to socialism.

The Great October Socialist Revolution and the socialist revolutions in other countries have spurred the political activity of working people throughout the world. The national liberation revolutions have set in motion tens and hundreds of millions of people who had been outside the pale of politics and opened up new prospects for peoples who had been subjected to colonial tyranny for centuries on end. The social struggle has been joined by a great multitude of people, who have no political experience but burn with hatred of imperialism and oppression.

In the industrialised capitalist states the steadily expanding monopolies are broadening the soil of social disaffection. The working class, which is growing stronger and continuously replenished as a result of the scientific and technological revolution, is receiving new possibilities of acquiring the most diverse allies.

Many intellectuals, who are playing a growing role in anti-imperialist actions, are likewise taking the road of

struggle. The urban middle strata, which had traditionally been the social mainstay of bourgeois regimes, are displaying increasing activity, becoming a force that is more frequently and more energetically opposing state-monopoly capitalism. Discontent is growing among the ruined peasantry, who refuse to reconcile themselves to monopoly oppression.

The scale being reached by the social struggle today would have been inconceivable without the huge contribution from young people who stormily protest against the injustices of exploiting society. Women are becoming an increasingly active force in all countries and facilitating the successes of the anti-imperialist struggle by their participation.

The developments in the armed forces of some countries are noteworthy. While among the military there are elements that have always been reactionary, segments that are patriotic and progressive are appearing and demanding revolutionary reforms. Significant changes are taking place in the Church with a section of the clergy, particularly the lower clergy, siding and sympathising with the protesting masses.

In the Main Document of the 1969 International Meeting of Communist and Workers' Parties it is stated: "The course of social development shows that imperialism comes into conflict with the vital interests of workers by hand and by brain, of different social strata, peoples and nations. As a result, growing masses of working people, social movements and entire peoples are rising against imperialism."*

The numerical growth of fighters is the great source of the multiplication of the revolutionary forces. At the same time, this inevitably extends the area in which misconceptions and views that had been overcome are once more

* *International Meeting of Communist and Workers' Parties, Moscow 1969, p. 21.*

being revived among the people drawn into the struggle for the first time.

Right opportunism and pseudo-Leftism, the two trends that revolutionary Marxism has had to fight in the working-class movement throughout its history, are still alive. Capitalism constantly reproduces the social environment nourishing them.

In present-day capitalist society new and old sources for the activation of opportunist trends in the working-class movement not only persist but frequently expand.

1. COMPLICATION OF CAPITALIST SOCIETY'S SOCIAL STRUCTURE

Capitalism's history is an uninterrupted process of the concentration of capital, the swallowing first of small and then of larger producers and the complete subordination of social production to monopoly capital.

There was a time when the working class drew its recruits from ruined artisans. But even after the latter became proletarians they went on dreaming of the "golden" age of independent small-scale production and eagerly embraced all sorts of reactionary utopias and hopes for a return to the past and an idealisation of that past.

Big capital can live only by removing the weak from its path. From 1950 to 1970 the number of independent proprietors in industry and construction in the FRG dropped from 889,000 to 704,000 (i.e., by 20.8 per cent). Hundreds of thousands of commercial enterprises have been closed. Statistics can give no idea of the nervous atmosphere of the lives of those who manage their small enterprises but already feel the ground slipping from under their feet. Not a day passes without a sign with the terse words "For sale" appearing on the closed doors of shops and cafes amid the ornate show-windows of large cities with their sham prosperity.

To this day ruined small producers remain one of the sources swelling the working class numerically. But this takes place on a scale far smaller than in the past for this source has been greatly exhausted. Nonetheless, the continued appearance at factories of people from the urban middle strata, of people who had worked at home or in tiny workshops, inescapably influences the reproduction of small-proprietary interests, notions and illusions among the workers.

Capitalism brings ruin to artisans. But small-scale production has not disappeared. Where it is profitable to do so capital, in entering a new sphere of application, exploits the small producers engaged in that sphere and leaves them a semblance of independence. The expansion of the services industry as a natural result of the increased requirements of the working people and their advances in the class struggle has led not only to the preservation but even to a numerical increase of the small proprietors in that industry.

There is a growing number of small enterprises existing exclusively at the mercy of capital, that has turned them into "home workshops" of large corporations.

In Italy, for instance, there were some 1,200,000 artisan enterprises in 1970. In that developed country one-tenth of the entire gainfully employed population (1,700,000 people) work at home.

The factories only assemble the end products. The entrepreneurs save money on the low wage, which in many cases is only 40 per cent of the average wage. They bear no expenses on social requirements and they have no dealings with trade unions. The profits from "black labour", as it is called in Italy, reach fabulous dimensions. Eighty per cent of the home-workers are women, but all the members of the family take part in the work. These defenceless home-workers easily succumb to reactionary influence.

This "parallel economy" is particularly widespread in

Japan. There the number of tiny enterprises with from one to four workers is growing not only in the services industry but also in the electrical, metalworking, precision instruments and other industries. Sixteen per cent of the total number of workers in the processing industry are employed at such enterprises, where remuneration amounts to half the wage of industrial workers.

The worker's total dependence on the employer is frequently deepened by an artificially created patriarchal environment, by family relations, by an allegedly joint interest in the "prosperity" of the enterprise. In 1969, at Japanese factories employing more than 500 workers 63 per cent were trade-union members, at enterprises employing up to 30 workers only 4.9 per cent belonged to trade unions, while in the processing industry only 1.5 per cent of the workers were members of trade unions.*

The numerical proportion of small enterprises differs in different countries, but they exist everywhere. This brings monopoly capital not only financial benefits. It creates a host of gradations in the working class, which is scattered among "parcel" enterprises, where the conditions giving shape to its class solidarity are undermined. The workers of small enterprises have a psychology of their own. Those who hesitated to approve the joint programme of the Left forces in France included workers employed mostly at small enterprises. There the employers intimidated their workers with the allegation that the programme envisaged the nationalisation of all factories (in fact, only one per cent of the factories) and would thereby deprive the workers of small enterprises of employment. Moreover, it is alleged that the social measures in the joint programme would lead to bankruptcy and, consequently, to dismissals.

* *Socio-Economic Problems of the Working People of Capitalist Countries (Employment, Wages, Consumption)*, Moscow, 1974, p. 260 (in Russian).

As a rule, there are no Party organisations at small and medium enterprises even in countries where the Communist parties are a mass force. The French Communists consider that they cannot afford to ignore enterprises employing five, 10 or 20 workers, for when such enterprises are ignored reaction quickly uses this for its own purposes. They feel that "it is necessary to work more actively among working people who are most susceptible to reformist ideology".*

At these enterprises there is usually more fertile soil for irrational forms of sectarian desperation and adventurism as an outlet for discontent. The workers are strongly influenced by camouflaged forms of exploitation, which are far from always perceived as manifestations of capitalist rule.

The peasantry had always been the largest source reinforcing the working class. As it penetrated the countryside capitalism forced hundreds of thousands and millions of independent proprietors to migrate to the cities. Quite recently in the social sciences there were many people who lauded the stability of the small peasant farm and asserted that the laws of capitalism were helpless against patriarchal traditions and would stop at the boundaries of the villages. Where are these prophets and oracles today?

Only half a century ago the majority of the able-bodied population of the capitalist countries were engaged in agriculture. Today, the number of people who live by tilling the soil is between 5 and 18 per cent of the total employed population in the leading industrialised capitalist countries. The countryside is moving to the towns, and this has become particularly pronounced during the past two decades.

Cold-bloodedly, as though the matter does not concern people, the bourgeois economists draw up long-term plans for the further ruin of the peasantry. Under the "plan"

* *L'Humanité*, March 30, 1973.

adopted by the Common Market countries, five of the ten million people engaged in agriculture, i.e., every second person, will by 1980 have moved to a new sphere of labour. Today not even the most unscrupulous demagogues will always venture to resort to the battered method of intimidating the peasants with the bogey of socialism, which allegedly brings about their ruin. It is enough to draw a comparison between the development of the GDR and the FRG to see that socialism saves the peasants from ruin and that they are reduced to penury by capitalism. In some countries this process has gone so far that the countryside no longer reinforces the ranks of the working class to the extent observed 60 or 70 years ago. Yet in a number of countries peasants still form a large proportion of the people joining the ranks of the working class.

The peasant of yesterday brings to the city his prejudices and predilections. Having been ruined and seeing the futility of the hopes of preserving their economic independence, many of them do not wish to join the ranks of the organised working-class movement and fight for an improvement of their condition; others succumb to Left-adventurist and fascist demagoguery. The Italian Communists have noted that the new workers from peasant families in South Italy employed at the Fiat factories are susceptible to anarchist feeling and show an inclination for Leftism. They are driven to this by desperation, lack of professional training, low wages, housing difficulties and unaccustomed conditions of life.

But alongside such traditional sources of working-class reinforcements as the ruined urban petty bourgeoisie and the peasantry, there have in recent years been increasingly perceptible processes leading to the proletarianisation of other strata of the population.

In Germany, for example, at the beginning of the century 13.3 per cent of the office employees became urban workers; at the close of the 1950s their number (in the FRG) rose to 29.7 per cent and in 1968 to 38 per cent.

There is a corresponding growth of the number of workers of white-collar origin. At the turn of the century they comprised only 1.5 per cent of the working class, but 60 years later their number increased to 5.7 per cent. In the 1950s people from white-collar families occupied the same place among the urban workers as the sons of peasants. "The transition to the status of urban workers is extremely painful for people from the middle strata: they regard their new condition as a drop in social status, as the collapse of their plans and hopes. As a consequence, many become hostile to the existing system and to the class to which they now belong."*

In Britain, influenced by the petty-bourgeois environment and by the traditional gravitation towards "respectability", a segment of the workers prefer to regard themselves as belonging to the "middle class". This is particularly the case not in purely proletarian areas but where a large proportion of the population are junior employees and small proprietors. Sociological surveys have brought to light the fact that this mostly concerns not workers by birth but people from the families of farmers, grocers, garage-owners and so forth. In the 1960s 68 per cent of these workers voted for the Conservatives.**

The heterogeneity of the working class, its division "into more or less developed strata", has always been skilfully utilised by the bourgeoisie to widen its social base and range one stratum against another. Here a special role is accorded to the so-called workers' aristocracy, a fairly stable stratum that receives certain privileges. Workers' MPs and members of representative institutions, conciliatory commissions and supervisory councils are recruited from that stratum.

* I. N. Faleyeva, "Sources of the Reinforcement of the Working Class in the FRG", *Rabochy klass i sovremennyy mir* No. 2, 1974, p. 90.

** N. M. Stepanova, *The Conservative Party and the Working Class in Postwar Britain. Political Influence on the Mass Voter*, Moscow, 1972, pp. 9, 130 (in Russian).

The certain growth of workers' wages after the war induced some petty-bourgeois ideologists to give an extremely wide-ranging interpretation of the term "workers' aristocracy". Since in some, particularly developing, countries the living standard of many workers was higher than that of the urban middle strata, to say nothing of the peasants, there was a tendency to consider the entire working class as a workers' aristocracy.

Lenin regarded the workers' aristocracy not only as a higher paid stratum of the proletariat but as a group, which having tolerable earnings, "boxed itself up in narrow, self-interested craft unions, and isolated itself from the mass of the proletariat, while in politics it supported the liberal bourgeoisie".*

As a result of the mass struggle of the working people and the social gains won in that struggle the gap in the material condition of the different strata of the working class began to narrow in the 1950s and 1960s, and today it is no longer possible to attribute the opportunism in the modern working class of the industrialised states solely to differences in material welfare. The sociological surveys conducted in Britain in the 1950s and the 1960s have refuted the fairly widespread opinion that worker support for the Conservative Party depended on the size of the wage.

The political attitudes of the workers are due not so much to the absolute size of their incomes as to how they themselves evaluate their welfare level, in other words, these attitudes depend on their requirements. Workers who are discontented by their condition are more radically disposed, and this discontent is largely determined by historical conditions, by the gains achieved in the class struggle and by what Lenin called the "law of increasing requirements".**

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 19, p. 370.

** Ibid., Vol. 1, p. 106.

The Leftist charges that the working class has lost its revolutionary role originate from the primitive notion that the poorer a man is the more revolutionary he becomes; it is argued that if the worker's living standard rises he automatically becomes less militant. The contention that "the worker becomes quieter as his wage rises" is refuted by the facts. In the FRG, Belgium and some other capitalist countries the metalworkers, who are a highly skilled contingent of the proletariat, often lead the strike movement and are extremely active politically.

Bourgeois ideologists and, with them, many reformist leaders precipitately depict the working class as having lost its class character and become a kind of "middle class", an amorphous category of comfortably living people—workers, office employees, intellectuals and even owners of medium enterprises.

The Leftist and bourgeois logic thus hardly differs, listing the entire working class as some sort of aristocracy.

Wage differentiation remains and not only does it depend on the worker's qualifications, which is quite natural, but is also the result of the bourgeoisie's class policy. But today this differentiation arises not so much within one or other branch of industry as through the creation of a privileged status for the most promising industries.

The British bourgeoisie, which is among the most experienced in the art of setting various strata of workers against each other, has found that today the mechanism oriented on such wage manoeuvring has ceased to function. Evidence of this is seen in the massive support given by the British working people to the miners' general strike in 1974. In Britain the miners are among the lowest paid categories of workers. The Conservatives, who were then in office, were confident that they could control the situation by ranging the miners against other strata of working people and adopted a hard line to their demand for higher pay. But they miscalculated. They believed that parliamentary elections would be a sort of plebiscite, in

which the categories of workers with a higher living standard would denounce the demands of the miners. That did not happen, and the Conservatives lost the elections.

Today the backbone of the Communist parties and of the Left Socialist trends consists of precisely those workers whose material condition is more or less satisfactory. This confirms Lenin's conclusion that in order to see their class interests and understand the historic role of their class the workers must have a certain level of well-being won in the class struggle.

However, precisely among workers who feel relatively secure at factories there are many who attribute themselves to the "middle class",* have reconciled themselves to their condition and cling to reformist views.

The scientific and technological revolution increases the demand for skilled workers and requires a higher intellectual level of them. But under capitalism there is inevitably a gulf between what this exploiting system presents for the worker's intellectual development and the growing intellectual requirements. This is seen more and more clearly by the most advanced segments of the working class. Unlike the pre-capitalist systems, capitalism *cannot* keep the workers in a state of oppression and ignorance. But the entrepreneur prefers to discharge workers whose qualifications do not conform to the development of new machinery rather than organise their retraining every few years.

In face of scientific and technological progress skilled workers are always under the threat of losing their skills. The knowledge that yesterday enabled them to occupy a certain position at a factory may prove to be inadequate today. Hence their uncertainty of the morrow. The rising

* In Britain, for example, a poll showed that nearly half of the workers supporting the Conservative Party regarded themselves as part of the "middle class". Some 20 per cent of the workers supporting the Labour Party are of the same view.

unemployment intensifies competition in the labour market. Capitalism is increasingly playing off skilled workers against each other and undermining their solidarity.

The problem of education has now become extremely acute for the worker himself and especially for his children, for their future status in society. The organised working-class movement is pressing for a democratic reform of the education system, but many workers count on making a way for their sons and daughters by themselves, often denying themselves bare necessities in order to send them to schools that give them the prospect of receiving a good qualification or entering an institution of higher learning.

In *The Demand for Equality*, a book published in Denmark in 1973, it is noted that the chances of the children of unskilled workers receiving an education are 1:25 of the children of businessmen. As a result, it is stated in the book, roughly 30 per cent of the lower-paid workers are unable or do not know who can help them to write an application or a complaint against management decisions.

Nevertheless, sociological studies indicate that workers attribute the inaccessibility of education for themselves and their children to various reasons but not to the exploiting social system. Many do not see even property inequality as springing from social inequality.

The specifics of modern production are also used by the bourgeoisie in their class interests. The sense of workers' solidarity, unity and a team spirit has been developing traditionally at factories. While giving the capitalist the possibility of making larger profits, the modernisation of factories helps him to disunite the workers and consolidate his class rule. The conveyor, which needs workers able to perform a few simple operations (so-called specialised workers), deprives labour of all creativity. The unskilled worker lives in constant fear of the morrow and he is depressed by his monotonous, backbreaking labour. Modern forms of capitalist exploitation strip the worker of professional pride, of his interest in belonging to a

working collective. This intensifies the sense of alienation, gives rise to political indifference and dulls class consciousness.

The Communist parties of a number of capitalist countries note that among specialised workers there are many who come from the families of small and middle peasants and urban and rural artisans and tradesmen, and also women, who take jobs in industry for the first time. They bring with them views formed under the strong influence of false ideas about the class struggle and the historic role of the working class. After finding by their own experience what capitalist exploitation is actually like, they are inclined towards spontaneous rebellion, and this is utilised by Leftist elements of all kinds. For its part, the bourgeoisie endeavours to make the specialised workers believe that the basic contradiction in society is not between labour and capital but between skilled and unskilled workers.

The strikes staged by specialised workers in France in 1973 demonstrated that this far from advanced segment of the proletariat is beginning to regard its interests as class interests and join in the traditional forms of struggle waged by the working class. The organised working-class movement in France supported the specialised workers, with the result that the latter secured the satisfaction of their demands. The French Communists are of the opinion that this action by specialised workers ushers in new prospects in the struggle against monopoly capital.

Soul-destroying labour at capitalist enterprises affects the formation of militant working collectives. In the USA it has been found that the "average" young man of 20 who began working in production at the close of the 1950s or the beginning of the 1960s will subsequently change his job at least six or seven times. In the British processing industry worker fluidity was between 30 and 40 per cent in the course of a single year. In periods when factories switched over to conveyer technology, the fluidity of the labour force in many countries reached 100, 200 and even

300 per cent annually. It is not hard to see how this affects the working collective.

The journal *Le Nouvel Observateur* (September 24-30, 1973) has estimated that in France 54.4 per cent of the gainfully employed population in 1973 consisted of people whom the journal calls "pariahs of the system". They include conveyer and agricultural workers, salesmen at cheap department stores, hospital attendants, seamstresses, window washers, house porters, dustmen and many others, "in fact, all who have nothing but their fatigue, sweat, time and health to sell in the labour market".

The condition of foreign workers is particularly difficult. According to estimates of the International Labour Office, there are 11 million migrant workers, including their families (this figure takes illegal migration into account), in Western Europe, while the annual migration rate is from 600,000 to 1,000,000.* The bourgeois press frequently calls these people "the new slaves", and this "slave-trade" has become as profitable as in slave-owning days. The "new slaves" perform the most unattractive and least-paid work and are denied the rights won by the working class of the given country from the entrepreneurs. Besides, factory-owners use foreign workers as a means of pressuring "refractory" elements among the local population.

Desperation has always bred desperation. Many of the foreign workers succumb easily to anarchism and the various Leftist recipes for an "easy way" to improve their condition.

In their usual emotional manner the so-called Left-radical ideologists give an extended interpretation of the negative factors that help capitalism to erode the militant

* *Migrant Workers*, International Labour Office, Geneva, 1973, p. 6. In the Common Market states (with the exception of Italy and Ireland) the share of foreign wage labour is about 10 per cent of the work force, while in Switzerland its share has reached 29.6 per cent. *World Marxist Review*, December 1973, p. 41.

solidarity of the working class. Unable and making no effort to comprehend reality as a whole, they clamour that the working class has lost its revolutionary spirit and speak of its integration in capitalist society. But the process of class consolidation, which has become more complex today, has never been simple. Despite the present complications that process continues to develop.

The very condition of the working class in capitalist society, as an exploited class, is the objective foundation of its revolutionary role, which cannot be changed either by situation factors or by the purposeful efforts of the ruling bourgeoisie. What may seem to be vague to the new reinforcements of the working class is perfectly clear to its main cadres. In the FRG the sons of urban workers comprise over 60 per cent of the working class. This is the nucleus through whose influence proletarian ideology is being adopted also by strata of working people who regard their affiliation to the working class as temporary or hope to improve their condition by their own individual efforts and not through a collective class struggle.

The social interests of one stratum or another is by no means directly expressed by its understanding of the phenomena around it or by its mood and psychology. On this point Lenin wrote that it was necessary to "learn to approach the masses with particular patience and caution so as to be able to understand the distinctive features in the mentality of each stratum, calling, etc., of these masses".*

The Communist parties are studying the specifics of the different strata of the working class in order to work out the right approach and, at the same time, obtain a better understanding of what mistaken ideas are held by the various strata and how these ideas can influence the consistent struggle waged by the vanguard of the working class.

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 31, p. 192.

The reanimation of Right opportunism and Leftism is the direct outcome of the recent growth of the role played by workers by brain in society. The scientific and technological revolution has led to a swift numerical growth of the intelligentsia and brought about essential changes in its social status.

In many countries the fastest numerical growth is seen among the technical intelligentsia. In France, for instance, its numerical strength in 1973 was approximately 15 per cent of the entire gainfully employed population. In that country there are industries in which the majority of the employees are engineers or technicians (50 per cent in the electronics industry, 60 per cent in the oil industry and 75 per cent in the nuclear industry).

Complex processes are to be observed among white-collar workers. Large strata of these workers are being ousted by computer technology and the mechanisation of office work. These processes are accompanied by growing social differentiation. In the 19th century managerial personnel received a salary that was 25 times greater than the pay of a worker. Today the wages of an average white-collar and a skilled worker have practically levelled up. But according to some sociologists, the incomes of the upper bracket of managers are 40 times higher than the incomes of the lower brackets, their housing expenses are 10 times higher, and their expenses on cultural requirements and recreation are respectively 16 and 60 times higher.*

The bourgeois sociologist Edward Shils distinguishes a sharp heterogeneity among the modern intelligentsia: "moderates and partisans in civil politics, quite apolitical concentration on their specialised intellectual preoccupations, cynical anti-political passivity, and faithful acceptance and service of the existing order".**

* N. M. Keizerov, *Power and Authority. A Critique of Bourgeois Theories*, Moscow, 1973, p. 216 (in Russian).

** *On Intellectuals. Theoretical Studies, Case Studies*. Ed. by Philip Rieff, New York, 1969, p. 33.

The intelligentsia reacts very sharply to the dehumanisation of product. Its work, once individual and creative, has become totally depersonalised and hopeless for many categories. Having acquired a mass character, professions that were formerly rare and brought benefits are now being devaluated. An atmosphere breeding desperation and hopelessness is taking shape.

Students, whom Lenin called "the most responsive section of the intelligentsia",* are giving many new facets to the activation of political feeling of various type. Under capitalism the effects of scientific and technological progress unavoidably induce students to give serious thought to their prospects. The lot of becoming a depersonalised worker in a dehumanised society, of becoming a diploma'd robot with low pay and an uncertain status evokes protests. According to UN data student unrest rolled across 50 capitalist countries at the close of the 1960s. This was the highest activity in the history of the student movement. A poll taken among French students in September 1968 showed that 12 per cent wanted not only a modification of the system at universities but also a radical reorganisation of society.**

However, this seething youth frequently brings pseudo-revolutionary feeling into the revolutionary movement. The desire to reshape the capitalist world as quickly as possible impel the most radical youth towards political adventurism. Trotskyist, anarchist and Maoist groups are constantly inciting them to take precipitate action, and preventing the students from joining in the struggle of the working class and the broad working masses.

The notions and ideas springing up in a given social environment not only reflect the objective processes taking place in the given country but may command growing influence and spread under the impact of ideas evolved in

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 7, p. 45.

** Adrien Dansette, *Mai 1968*, Paris, 1971, p. 190.

a different environment. This is a result of the expanding internationalisation of social life and the reciprocal influence of social experience, cultures and ideas born under the most diverse conditions.

Bourgeois Europe, which for centuries had gloried in its colonies complacently and refused to regard the enslaved peoples as capable of making any contribution whatever to mankind's ideological and cultural treasure-store, unexpectedly to itself found that many of the liberated nations have an ancient culture, that the national liberation revolutions had produced their own ideologists and given birth to revolutionary ideas that are unusual for Europeans.

The downfall of the colonial system powerfully influenced mankind's entire development. But the progressive processes of new national relations began to be accompanied by processes such as a purely imitative adoption of everything stemming from the liberation struggle.

As though to atone for the historical wrong done by the developed states to the former colonial countries, some sections of intellectuals and young people have begun to take an interest in the latter's revolutionary practice. However, the most fantastic social ideas are sometimes propounded in the latter countries where class relations are undeveloped. While these ideas may be explained as being the product of local conditions, when transferred to a different environment they very often acquire an irrational character.

Such was the case, for example, with the views propounded by Franz Fanon, an ideologist of the Third World, when he proclaimed that the new class of the "damned" (meaning the peasants and the semi-proletariat of the former colonies) had a special role in history and preached a "spirit of violence". He wrote: "Let us quit this Europe which incessantly speaks of man and massacres him in all the corners of its own cities and in the most remote corners of the world. . . . We know the price

mankind has paid for every victory of the spirit. . . . Let us decide not to imitate Europe but bend our muscles and our brains in a new direction. Let us endeavour to create a new, integral man whom Europe was incapable of shaping. . . . Today the Third World faces Europe as a colossal mass destined to contribute to the problems it has not resolved. . . . For Europe, for ourselves and for all humanity we must try to create a new skin for ourselves, develop new thought and attempt to mould a new man.”*

Fanon’s denunciation of Western civilisation’s inhumanity towards the Third World was acclaimed by many intellectuals. Jean-Paul Sartre, who wrote the preface to Fanon’s book, saw in the life of the African the true essence of being—simple, unsophisticated, closely bound to nature and devoid of the engineering rationality burdening the city-dweller of the industrialised capitalist countries. The technocised world began to be rejected in favour of a free display of human instincts that were not held in check and distorted by civilised society.

The attraction that the symbols of the Third World have for radical intellectuals has been broadly mirrored in literature, painting, slogans and even direct imitation of the revolutionary attributes and forms of the national liberation struggle. While formerly the prevailing trend was to interpret the problems of the colonial countries by likening them to the more or less analogous problems of the metropolises, the tendency that followed was to interpret European problems by reducing them to the problems of the Third World.

The atmosphere was thereby created for the spread also of Maoist ideas and the slogans of the “cultural revolution” with its barbarous destruction of cultural values and denigration of recognised authorities. Although in Europe the Maoist groups are tiny and have not sunk deep roots, the fact of their existence is evidence that today the capitalist countries have the psychological climate for the

* Franz Fanon, *Les damnés de la terre*, Paris, 1970, pp. 229-33.

appearance of currents in opposition to the working-class movement.

And all this takes place under constant ideological pressure from the bourgeoisie, which day after day drums into people’s minds its ideas of morals and prestige, its base ideals.

The school, the Church, the innumerable mass media and all-penetrating advertisements instil definite notions, whose purpose is, in the larger context, to mystify reality, conceal the actual sources of social conflicts and reconcile people to the existing way of life. The day-to-day practical experience being accumulated by the workers, by all working people, in the course of their work in production and their struggle for their vital requirements does not tally with what the omnipresent means of ideological brainwashing keep telling them and inevitably evokes doubts and protests and gives rise to ideas that differ from those that are being so harassingly forced upon them.

But this commonplace conscience cannot reach the hidden mainsprings of social relationships. For this personal experience is inadequate however considerable it may be. In pre-capitalist societies the common experience of man gave him the possibility of understanding his dependent condition. It was easy for the slave and the serf to understand that he was being forcibly compelled, oppressed and exploited. “Those ancient social organisms of production,” Marx wrote, “are, as compared with bourgeois society, extremely simple and transparent.”*

Ever since its emergence capitalism has been sowing the illusion that relations of equality exist between the owners of the means of production and those who owned nothing save their own labour power. In the first chapter of Volume I of *Capital* Marx showed the nature of commodity fetishism, showing that it concealed the entire nature of exploiting capitalist society. As the “root cause”, so to

* Karl Marx, *Capital*, Vol. I, Moscow, 1972, p. 83.

speak, commodity fetishism gives rise to innumerable other fetishes, such as the fetish of wages, that gives the impression of remuneration for labour, the fetish of equal opportunities, the fetish of democratic freedoms, and so on.

Education often gets on with a distorted perception of the realities of capitalist society. On the basis of extensive, including sociological, data the French Communists, for example, note that in their country the intellectuals regard the existing relations of production "essentially in the image of arbitrary decisions and not in the reality of the profound objective functions which they actually perform under state-monopoly capitalism".*

With the development of state-monopoly capitalism and the aggravation of social relations the ruling class creates an increasingly intricate system for the intellectual manipulation of the masses, a system whose aim is to make the masses accept unreservedly the countless fetishes without which the entire mechanism of modern capitalist exploitation cannot function normally.

Under the present tempo of life and with the unprecedented expansion of the sources and media of information, the subterfuges and dodges used by advertising to embed stereotypes into the mind of hurrying man, bourgeois political organisations have large staffs specialising in the production of catchwords and clichés putting over the ideas and norms required by these organisations. For example: "There is practically no difference between the capitalist and the worker. The former gets a wage on capital", "Work submissively and hope! The worker of today is the capitalist of tomorrow", "Those who have no jobs have only themselves to blame!"

The bourgeois aspiration to narrow the outlook and, thereby, the activity of the working class is very eloquent-

* Antoine Casanova, Claude Prévost, Joe Metzger, *Les intellectuels et les luttes de classes*, Paris, 1970, p. 69.

ly expressed in a cliché that was for a very long time dinned into the minds of working people in Argentina. "From home to work, and from work—home!" The Argentinian Communists showed the real purpose of this cliché, namely, to disarm the working people in face of their class enemy. They made it clear that exhortations of this kind were an attempt to prevent the working class from influencing the liberation movement in that country.

In the early 1970s bingo became a craze throughout the capitalist world. Every evening tens of millions tried their luck on several cards, each of which had catchwords such as "Human nature may change, but it won't change much during our lifetime", "In the battle for existence, Talent is the punch. But the main thing in tactics is footwork" and "Rely on a half-truth, but you may have got hold of the wrong half". Hundreds of such maxims giving the bourgeois, philistine idea of morals, of the futility of hoping for a change, are put across in the course of the game. It is hard to see through this thick fog enveloping people's minds in the capitalist world.

The bourgeois way of life kindles the striving to get ahead at all costs. Giving out this bourgeois "ideal" as common to all mankind, the American sociologist Seymour Martin Lipset writes: "All other things being equal, people are prone to see themselves among the more rather than the less privileged, if any option exists for them. Politically, this implies pressure to become more conservative."* Although this bourgeois sociologist gives the psychological mechanism of bourgeois careerism out for a standard pretending that he does not notice the existence of another moral, another mentality, it would be near-sighted to fail to see the consequences of this destructive possibility of capitalism relative to the working class and all other strata of working people.

* *American Sociology. Perspectives, Problems, Methods*. Ed. by Talcott Parsons, New York, 1968, p. 168.

The social processes in capitalist society do not follow one and the same pattern. The same strata may simultaneously produce glaringly radical and Right-opportunist ideas. Life constantly bears out Lenin's conclusion that "one and the same class peculiarity (that of the petty bourgeoisie, for example) is displayed both in the dejection of the opportunist and in the desperation of the terrorist".* In most cases pseudo-revolutionary groups consist of intellectuals reduced to desperation, who regard terrorism as the sole means of struggle. Among the same intellectuals there are many who favour trivial reformism. In the 1960s, when an upswing of Left-radical feeling was observed among intellectuals everywhere there was a growth of the number of people with a higher education in the social-reformist parties as well: in the FRG from 6 to 12 per cent, in Japan from 9 to 16 per cent and in Sweden from 8 to 18 per cent.** To this day, as over half a century ago, to use Lenin's words, bourgeois society is "continually producing... opportunists who love to call themselves socialists" and "deliberately and systematically deceive the masses with the most florid and 'radical' words".***

Capitalist reality has nothing in common with its bourgeois and reformist portrayal as a society of equal opportunities and fading social conflicts, as a society of social partnership. Neither has this reality anything in common with the assertion of the Leftists, who consider that since there has been a "general proletarianisation" capitalism has annulled all distinctions between factory workers, students, office employees and intellectuals, or with the assertions of those who see in analogous processes nothing save "growing bourgeoisification" that leaves only the lumpen proletariat as a revolutionary force. Marcuse, the high

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 15, p. 152.

** *Fortune*, October 1973, pp. 182-91.

*** V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 21, p. 429.

priest of the New Lefts, quibbled: "It is only for the sake of those without hope that hope is given to us."*

Life does not fit into these Leftist patterns or into bourgeois and social-reformist patterns.

In March 1972 *France Nouvelle*, a weekly of the French Communist Party, eloquently showed that it was not at all simple to place proletarian ideology within reach of the middle strata compelled to sell their labour power.

As they enter the sphere of wage labour millions of peasants, urban small proprietors, artisans, shopkeepers, workers by brain and people following the liberal professions begin to acquire experience of the class struggle, frequently from the standpoint of the petty-bourgeois way of thinking.

On the one hand, people are exploited, the working-class movement has accumulated theoretical experience, there are proletarian organisations and the working class wages an organised struggle. On the other hand, prejudices and a way of thinking created by the existing system and rooted in time persist. The logic of the struggle ultimately triumphs. But this by no means signifies that there is only one highroad. There are roads along which they reconcile the irreconcilable, and these roads lead to reformism. There are roads of blind rebellion. If on these roads you turn to the Right they lead to neofascism, and if you turn to the Left they lead to some variety of anarchism. Those who regard themselves close to Marxism and bear malice for the Communists end up in a Trotskyist group or some sect of intellectuals preaching Maoism.

But capitalism remains unchanged, and for that reason the environment which gives rise to new or revives old ideas that seek to oust proletarian ideology can produce nothing except bourgeois or petty-bourgeois views.

* Gil Green, *The New Radicalism: Anarchist or Marxist?*, New York, 1971, p. 113.

2. DO PRESENT-DAY DEVIATIONS REMAIN PETTY-BOURGEOIS?

Régis Debray, author of *Revolution in the Revolution* (*Revolution dans la révolution*, Paris, 1967), took umbrage when his views, as those of his Leftist associates, were called petty-bourgeois by the Communists. He argues that in Latin America it would be ludicrous to give the word "petty bourgeois" the same meaning that it has in Europe. To console him it may be said that the petty bourgeoisie whose views were opposed by Marx and Engels is today non-existent in Europe as well. It has become to a large extent a quite different petty bourgeoisie. Nevertheless, to this day there is every reason to assess the views held by a section of the intelligentsia and young people as petty-bourgeois.

In their analysis of the explosion of Leftism in 1968 the French Communists proceeded from the contention that in the period of the crisis of state-monopoly capitalism France does not resemble the France of the flourishing bourgeoisie of the 19th century, that there is a difference between Rocard and Proudhon, between Sartre and Kropotkin. But despite the distinctions in forms and transformations, Leftism, both present and past, is the product of the petty bourgeois maddened by the horrors of capitalism. At the same time, it is a phenomenon whose forms must be studied in the context of concrete situations.

Many Marxist scholars are of the opinion that in Asia, Africa and some Latin American countries the petty bourgeoisie in its classical form is not as numerous as people are wont to believe. Indeed, in these countries the single term "petty bourgeois" cannot express the entire range of relations, from primitive communal, patriarchal and lumpen-type pauperism to various pre-capitalist and semi-capitalist forms of dependence. While acknowledging the unquestioned conventionality of the term "petty bourgeois" in characterising the groups of the population em-

braced by these economic systems, K. N. Brutents justifiably draws attention in his book *National Liberation Revolutions Today* (p. 118) to the fact that these social strata, at any rate, a considerable portion of these strata "are petty-bourgeois in political behaviour, in socio-economic tendency and prospects of development. Indeed, it is they, together with some groups of the intelligentsia whose attitudes are not least importantly determined by their ties with these sections, that are the chief vehicles of the petty-bourgeois tendency in the oppressed countries".

The bourgeoisie pours out encouraging "criticism" of Leftist views, flirts with their protagonists and reinforces their belief that the Marxists have sunk into dogmatism and for that reason cannot see anything new. But the point is that this new is what confirms the Marxist proposition that it is by no means necessary to be a shopkeeper to represent the views of the petty bourgeoisie. Writing of the exponents of petty-bourgeois ideas, Marx noted: "According to their education and their individual position they may be as far apart as heaven from earth. What makes them representatives of the petty bourgeoisie is the fact that in their minds they do not get beyond the limits which the latter do not get beyond in life, that they are consequently driven, theoretically, to the same problems and solutions to which material interest and social position drive the latter practically. This is, in general, the relationship between the *political* and *literary representatives* of a class and the class they represent."^{*}

The social nature of views is not determined directly by the social origin or position of those who propound them. In the present world, which is divided, as in Lenin's time, into classes, there can be either bourgeois or socialist ideology.

Marxist criticism of anarchism in its many manifesta-

^{*} K. Marx and F. Engels, *Selected Works*, in three volumes, Vol. 1, Moscow, 1973, p. 424.

tions, from opportunist Proudhonism to extremist Bakuninism, showed the utopian and harmful character of the anarchist aspirations to break away from society's objective, class nature and the ensuing ways of remaking that society. Whether it was instinctive or deliberate, the striving to occupy an intermediate position between the two main struggling class forces had always, sooner or later, demonstrated its untenability, but it invariably had the support of the bourgeoisie, which was interested in camouflaging its class image.*

The fact that today Left-radical and Right-opportunist ideologists sometimes use Marxist terms and even concepts is evidence not of their reorientation but of the struggle between the two world systems and the growing strength of the international working class have compelled them to have more and more frequent recourse to Marxist terminology. But the modernisation of petty-bourgeois ideology and the unquestionable radicalisation of some of its branches do not worry the ruling class for the simple reason that determination in words is merely a screen for timidity in action and thereby objectively serves bourgeois ideology.

When the Marxists call one or another concept petty-bourgeois, they do so not, as some ideologists believe, to

* In countries that have not attained a high level of capitalist development, where bourgeois ideology has not become predominant and the conditions have not matured for the spread of scientific socialism, social ideas, while being inherently petty-bourgeois, can nonetheless play a progressive role. For some time they may remain as transitional ideologies, but sooner or later they lose their intermediate character. Such are the specifics of the anti-imperialist ideology of the national liberation movements in some Asian, African and Latin American countries.

Among the various conceptions of "national socialism", there are, in addition to those that are mainly of a bourgeois character, conceptions that have a revolutionary-democratic content and mirror the growing influence of Marxist ideology. (K. N. Brutents, *National Liberation Revolutions Today*, Moscow, 1977, p. 142.)

slap on a label or hurl abuse. An assessment of a phenomenon as petty-bourgeois accurately expresses its scientific definition as intermediate or attempting to preserve something between proletarian and bourgeois ideology. Of course, to define views as petty-bourgeois does not in any way remove the need to make a concrete study of these views, to examine their specifics and new features.

Recent developments have once again confirmed that the intermediate position of many strata of modern society is also an indication that the intermediate ideologies reflecting this position are also shortlived. As long as capitalism exists, there will be the conditions for the appearance of diverse and even very different ideological conceptions. One of the reasons for the great number of these conceptions today is undoubtedly the rapid numerical growth of the intelligentsia and the considerable change that their position undergoes as a result of scientific and technological progress. That various viewpoints reflecting the interests of sometimes opposing social forces appear among intellectuals is evidence not only of the intelligentsia's heterogeneity but also of the fact that the "intelligentsia are so called just because they most consciously, most resolutely and most accurately reflect and express the development of class interests and political groupings in society as a whole".*

The present position of the intelligentsia differs in many ways from the status they had once occupied, but their ability, noted by Lenin, to express different class interests remains unchanged, much as Lenin's conclusion that although it is becoming harder for the intelligentsia to live in capitalist society they "for the most part regard this society from the viewpoint of the small producer".**

The changes that have occurred in the work and life of the intelligentsia have brought forward many authors who

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 7, p. 45.

** Ibid., Vol. 6, p. 434.

attempt to depict the modern intelligentsia as a new class that will take over the leadership of the revolutionary struggle, as a new social and political force that will replace the working class, which has allegedly lost its revolutionary militancy. In 1968 the proclamation of a new (students') vanguard had some influence on people unable to resist political fashion. Subsequent events brought to light the speculative character of the postulates about the special and, in addition, independent role of the intelligentsia today. Marxist criticism has convincingly demonstrated that the social nature of the intelligentsia does not change at any stage of capitalism's development. This remains true despite the scientific and technological revolution which has speeded up their differentiation. Large sections of the intelligentsia have drawn closer to the conditions of workers, a certain proportion has become part of the working class, while the position of the élite does not in any way differ from that of the bourgeoisie.

It is obvious that like the other petty-bourgeois strata, the intelligentsia, while intensifying the social struggle headed by the working class, bring with them much that is negative: ideological confusion, impatience, instability, illusions and harmful ideas. But the attitude of the working class to the petty bourgeoisie has never been exclusively negative. For the Marxists the struggle against petty-bourgeois ideology signifies not only concern for the ideological purity and revolutionary confidence of the working-class movement but also a struggle for strata, which while being extremely susceptible to the influence of non-proletarian ideas may join in the people's fight against the monopolies.

The Communists believe that Leftist animation is due to the deepening social conflicts and hardships experienced by the intermediate strata of recently proletarianised groups of the population. This animation reflects the aspiration of these groups to restructure the existing system. We would therefore be adopting a simplified and super-

ficial approach if we were to reduce the mainsprings to their external manifestations, to reverse the link between cause and effect, to fail to see that extremism is a side effect of the involvement of new masses in the struggle.

"People condemned to inhuman labour and insufferable conditions of life," Luigi Longo wrote, "instinctively arrive at the thought that the way out lies in 'destroying everything', in demolishing everything and in using radical and global forms of asserting 'justice'. Hence the tendency to reject all intermediate aims, and any alliance or agreement with the forces and organisations moving in the same direction but along a different road from ours.

"At different periods of the history of the working-class movement these trends, which we call extremist, had different names: Luddism, anarchism, anarcho-syndicalism, Bordighism, Trotskyism and, today, Maoism. But one should not be deluded by the diversity of terms springing most frequently from the historical developments under other conditions and in other periods. All have little in common with the present period and with the movements that use these terms and proudly call themselves extremists.

"There is a certain propensity to adopt an extremist pose. In many cases it signifies something quite different."*

Naturally, as the movement broadens more possibilities arise for the emergence of all sorts of petty-bourgeois deviations, for galvanising even those that had been overcome long ago by the movement and giving fantastic shape to the new deviations from the proletariat's consistent guideline. But only sectarians are prepared to narrow the militant forces artificially for the sake of safeguarding their revolutionary purity. The communist vanguard is confident that all vacillations and petty-bourgeois notions are overcome much more quickly in the course of a real

* Luigi Longo, Carlo Salinari, *Tra reazione e rivoluzione. Ricordi e riflessioni sui primi anni di vita del PCI*, Milan, 1972, p. 127.

struggle, and it therefore strives to draw as many people as possible into actions against the monopolies.

At the same time, the Communist parties are uncompromising in their attitude to the attempts to make concessions to bourgeois and also to petty-bourgeois ideologies in their Right-opportunist or Left-extremist manifestations. "The Communist parties," Leonid Brezhnev said, "justly believe that the interests of their own cohesion, the interests of the whole anti-imperialist movement insistently demand an intensification of the struggle against revisionism and both Right and 'Left' opportunism. A principled stand on this issue has always been a most important condition for strengthening a Party's political positions and has always mobilised and enhanced the activity of Communists in the class struggle."^{*}

^{*} *International Meeting of Communist and Workers' Parties, Moscow 1969, p. 156.*

CHAPTER FOUR

THE ROLE OF REVOLUTIONARY THEORY

To be a revolutionary vanguard means not only to be in the forefront, but also to look ahead, to see not only the immediate surroundings but also what lies beyond the horizon. The vanguard acquires this ability if it is armed with a scientific theory that correctly interprets phenomena throughout their depth. The elaboration by Marx and Engels of the revolutionary theory that illumines the road to the future preceded the appearance of the working-class movement's vanguard. In each country the revolutionary Marxist Party was formed, as a rule, by a nucleus of like-minded people united by their recognition of revolutionary theory and the need for applying it in practice.

Answering those who considered that the build-up of the Communist Party should begin with organisational construction, Lenin wrote: "Don't you think you should argue the other way round, comrades 'publicists and Mensheviks engaged in practical work'? Think it over—can you *unify* organisational activities if there is no *unified* conception of the interests and tasks of the class? When you have thought it over, you will see that you cannot."^{*}

^{*} V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 12, p. 323.

In order to act correctly it is vital to understand reality, to chart a road, without which groping in the dark is inevitable. For that reason the revolutionary Marxists regard the correctness of theory and its continuous enrichment and development as the prime condition for the successful fulfilment by the Party of its revolutionary role.

1. IDEOLOGICAL PLURALISM IN THE PARTY—THE ROAD TO LIQUIDATIONISM

History provides many facts showing the important role played by Marxist-Leninist theory in the struggle and successes of the Communist parties. Marxist thought met every new phase of social development with full understanding of its essence and basic orientations. Long before the first proletarian revolution Marx and Engels demonstrated that it was inevitable and showed what its fundamental features would be. The Great October Socialist Revolution, the initiation of socialist construction in a country encircled by hostile capitalist states, industrialisation, collectivisation and every other new period of the socialist country's development was preceded by a theoretical elaboration of fundamental political problems, an elaboration that was constantly enriched and specified in the course of revolutionary practice.

Today, with revolutionary processes ranging far beyond the boundaries of individual countries, increasing importance is acquired by the theoretical elaboration of the ways for the development of world socialism and the national liberation movement, and of the international problems of the struggle against imperialism. Marxist-Leninist theory gives the communist movement confidence in its actions and helps to awaken the revolutionary energy and creativity of the working masses. The parties guided by this advanced theory always act as revolutionary parties.

Besides directly confirming the role of theory, history provides proof of what in mathematics is called the "rule of contraries". The degeneration of a number of Western Social-Democratic parties from revolutionary to reformist organisations resting content with practicism and utilitarianism within the framework of capitalist society, with adaptation to that society, began with the undermining of key principles of revolutionary theory and ended with the total repudiation not only of that theory but also of everything that contained even a hint of an integral ideological system. In 1946, when the West German Social-Democratic Party was being restored organisationally its leader Kurt Schumacher said: "It is immaterial to us if in becoming a Social-Democrat a person is guided by the methods of Marxist economic analysis or by some other philosophical or ethical motivations, or by intellectual considerations."* What much earlier had become practice for German Social-Democracy was formalised in 1959 in the Party Programme adopted at the Bad-Godesberg Congress. This Programme defines the Party as an association of people with different views and conceptions, specifying that the roots of Social-Democracy lie in Christian ethics, in humanism, in classical philosophy and so forth.

The Right-wing Social-Democratic leaders in the FRG boast that the SDP's supporters are not bound by definite philosophical or religious convictions. Yet when young Social-Democrats begin to show an interest in revolutionary Marxism they are threatened with excommunication. Every indication of an interest in true revolutionary theory is expelled from the Social-Democratic Party (in which they love to refer to Schumacher, the apostle of ideological omnivorousness) as seditious and, at the same time, it is claimed that Schumacher's behests remain valid to this

* *Parteitag der Sozialdemokratischen Partei Deutschlands, vom 10. bis 14 April, 1973, Hannover, Bd. 1, Protokoll der Verhandlungen Anlagen, Bonn, 1973, p. 17.*

day but "if there still are people who think they can uphold the theses of the GCP or the SUPG, it must be made clear to them that they must look for some other place for their agitation, and not in our party".*

One can refrain from going into what this pharisaical "breadth" and ideological toleration mean in practice since, as it may seem at first glance, they have nothing to do with the ideological struggle over the problem of the revolutionary vanguard. But one cannot ignore the fact that the preaching of "ideological toleration" perfectly suits those who continue to pose as Marxists while attacking the ideological foundations of the Communist parties.

The following pronouncement gives an idea of what these pseudo-Marxists think the Party should be like: "It should not have an official philosophy, and its principles should be neither idealistic, nor materialistic, nor religious, nor atheistic." These words were articulated not by a Right-wing Social-Democrat but by a person who regarded himself a Communist and suggested recipes that the Party had to follow "if it does not want to be a sect of doctrinaires".** The propounder of this idea, which in no way differs from trivial Social-Democratic notions, is Roger Garaudy. The French Communists quite rightly saw in his "counsels" and assertions a revisionist distortion of Marxism urging a repetition of the process passed by Social-Democracy and threatening to turn the vanguard Party into a "non-partisan party". Fischer went further than Garaudy, arguing that it was desirable to introduce a ruling permitting membership of the Party "to many of those who do not approve of all the provisions of the programme".***

* *Parteitag der Sozialdemokratischen Partei Deutschlands, vom 10. bis 14. April, 1973, Hannover, Bd. I, Protokoll der Verhandlungen Anlagen*, pp. 100-01.

** Roger Garaudy, *Le grand tournant du socialisme*, Paris, 1969, p. 284.

*** Ernst Fischer, *Die Revolution ist anders*, Hamburg, 1971, p. 33.

This "innovation" contains nothing new. The Communists have heard it before. Regarding the demand that every Party member should be assured "*complete freedom of revolutionary and philosophical thought*", Lenin wrote: "This slogan is thoroughly opportunist. In all countries this kind of slogan has been put forward in the Socialist parties only by opportunists and in practice has meant nothing but 'freedom' to corrupt the working class with bourgeois ideology."*

The present revisionists, like their predecessors, are much enticed by the role of "renewers" of Marxism. They always wish to pose as opponents of doctrinairism and champions of the creative development of theory. But to this day one is justified in asking the question that was asked long ago by Lenin: What have the revisionist "renewers" introduced into theory? "*Absolutely nothing*. Not by a single step have they advanced the science which Marx and Engels enjoined us to develop; they have not taught the proletariat any new methods of struggle; they have only retreated, borrowing fragments of backward theories and preaching to the proletariat, not the theory of struggle, but the theory of concession—concession to the most vicious enemies of the proletariat, the governments and bourgeois parties who never tire of seeking new means of baiting the Socialists."**

These words were written in 1899, when the vanguard Party of the working class of Russia had not yet come into being, while Social-Democracy in the West was displaying a certain immunity to the disease of revisionism. In those years it was only possible to foresee the pernicious consequences that revisionism would result in. Today that possibility rests on the bitter lessons to be drawn from the degeneration of the Social-Democratic parties, the degeneration to which they were led by the protagon-

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 16, p. 270.

** Ibid., Vol. 4, p. 211.

ists of ideological tractability and unscrupulousness. In the light of present-day anti-communist campaigns, the means which in those years were used by the bourgeoisie to bait revolutionary Socialists are seen as the initial, preventive measures by a class that had not yet felt itself mortally threatened. But with the spread of the class war it became increasingly vital to the communist movement to uphold the purity of its theoretical banner.

Today the true followers of Marxist-Leninist theory have every reason to consider that a Party cannot be strong if revolutionary theory is not protected against attack, against attempts to undermine its ideological foundations.

In urging uncompromising criticism of the revisionist "critics", Lenin wrote: "We anticipate a flood of accusations for these words; the shouts will rise that we want to convert the Socialist Party into an order of 'true believers' that persecutes 'heretics' for deviations from 'dogma', for every independent opinion, and so forth. We know about all these fashionable and trenchant phrases. Only there is not a grain of truth or sense in them."^{*}

After going through a cycle of modifications, every vogue returns to its original form. Trenchant phrases about the persecution of "heretics" for deviations from "dogma" have again come into fashion. But revisionism has degenerated. Its present-day proponents do not have their Bernsteins and Vollmars. Unable to produce anything integral in opposition to Marxist-Leninist theory, they subsist on attempts to distinguish between the young and the mature Marx, find differences between Engels and Marx, argue that the main thing is "to read Marx anew"^{**} and devise theories that may create the impression that there are contradictions between Leninism and Marxism.

^{*} V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 4, p. 211.

^{**} Ernst Fischer, op. cit., p. 55.

While agreeing, at best, to see in Marxism a scientific method helping to study social phenomena, the revisionists refuse to regard it as a science, making the pretence that they do not note the absurdity of drawing a dividing line between method and the scientific conclusions that have been drawn on its basis. Revisionism is eager to assess every social phenomenon outside its links with preceding phenomena and thereby make it possible to regard that phenomenon not as a new manifestation of general laws but as something unprecedented.

Lenin noted that revisionism can come forward in an endless variety of forms, "that every more or less 'new' question, every more or less unexpected and unforeseen turn of events, even though it changes the basic line of development only to an insignificant degree and only for the briefest period, will always inevitably give rise to one variety of revisionism or another".^{*} Views are being spread to the effect that in our complex epoch there may be several varieties of Marxism and that each has the right to exist. It is proclaimed that apostasy of Marxism is "new Marxism", "renovated communism" and so on.

The purpose of all this is to depict revolutionary theory as something extremely relative, to undermine confidence in the durability of the laws of social development it has brought to light. The shoddy sceptical idea is retailed that since our social knowledge is conditional it is senseless to abide strictly by that knowledge. From this they go to the next step, urging "variety in assessment", ideological plurality in the Party and total repudiation of ideology as such. In speaking of the present-day revisionist, one could use the words of the authoress Iris Murdoch, who wrote: "Everything had a theory, and yet there was no master theory."^{**}

Actually, in preaching "freedom" from anything

^{*} V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 15, p. 38.

^{**} Iris Murdoch, *Under the Net*, London, 1960, p. 58.

approaching an integral theory the revisionists play on the self-opinion and vanity of those intellectuals who consider that the highest manifestation of freedom and independence is that on every issue one must have one's own opinion that must in some way, at least, differ from the conclusions arrived at by Marxist-Leninist theory.

For the revolutionary Party revolutionary theory is not an exercise in rhetoric, in reasoning, or a sphere for drawing-room prattle and journalistic "bravado" and "originality". It is a guide to action. Words are followed by action, and if words are irresponsible one can hardly expect anything good of practice. On many occasions Lenin noted that no step could be taken in practical politics without answering fundamental questions, without assessing the current phase of social development and the alignment of class forces and political parties. "To determine its conduct from case to case, to adapt itself to the events of the day and to the chopping and changing of petty politics, to forget the primary interests of the proletariat and the basic features of the whole capitalist system, of all capitalist evolution, to sacrifice these primary interests for the real or assumed advantages of the moment—such is the policy of revisionism."* Lenin pointed out that the opportunists always called for a "business-like or practical" approach, but they shunned "broad and general" issues, closing their eyes to the fact that "in the final analysis broad, principled politics are the only real, practical politics".**

In combating opportunism, the Marxists-Leninists insist that theoretical questions should not be removed and that all Party practice should be raised to the level of the theoretical illumination of problems. It will be recalled that the laudation of experience and nothing but experience underlay the pragmatism condemned by Lenin

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 15, pp. 37-38.

** Ibid., Vol. 12, p. 489.

in the early 20th century, a pragmatism that in those years was "the 'latest fashion' in the latest American philosophy".* This undisguised apologia of American efficiency assesses the "genuineness" of theory by its use and suitability in life no further than today. This is a "theory" that brings emancipation from theory, from principles.

Since then there have appeared many proponents of pragmatism, including such that attribute their ideas to Marxism, which rightly regards practice as the criterion of truth. Pragmatist falsification of Marxism has become a widely used method of anti-communist propaganda.

No revisionist, of course, wishes to admit his spiritual kinship with bourgeois ideology, and not all will resort to references to philosophical provisions. But the sinister facet of pragmatism lies not only in its claims to having a scientific foundation but also in the fact that it is diffident, creeping and shuns the conception "pragmatism" while actually using it as a guide.

In the 1950s, the revisionists, after precipitating a serious crisis in the Communist Party of the USA, suggested removing from the Party Programme all mention of Marxism-Leninism with the argument that in the process of struggle the working class would itself evolve its "theory of action". Even after they had, in face of enormous difficulties, overcome this crisis, the American Communists, who were faithful to Marxism-Leninism, felt it was important that there should be no relaxation of the struggle against pragmatism. They held that although as a theory pragmatist revisionism had been entirely repudiated by the Party, the philosophy and method of pragmatism continued to affect the work of the Party organisations.

A favourite device of the revisionists is to urge people to "learn from events". Utilitarian practice is the idol of pragmatism, and this primitivism was criticised by Lenin,

* Ibid., Vol. 14, p. 342.

who wrote: "But in order 'not to come too late', in order not to become a politician who is wise after the event, learning from events is not enough."* It is necessary to understand the entire course of events, to recognise the basic correlations between the classes that determine the policies of different parties. That is exactly what the revisionists avoid. Their standing claim is that they are improving Marxism, but under the influence of current events they are prepared to jettison its principles, make haste to reconcile mutually excluding attitudes and seek to deprive the Party of its ideological foundation. That is precisely why the Communists regard Right-wing revisionism as a liquidationist school, i.e., a school actually pursuing the objective of abolishing the Marxist-Leninist Party.

The intention to obtain freedom from theory comes not only from the Right; it is also part and parcel of pseudo-Leftism, and generally of the petty-bourgeois parties characterised by endless and fruitless discussions and the coexistence of various, frequently diametrically opposite conceptions.

Although the distinction between Right revisionism and pseudo-Leftism is frequently hard to discern, Lenin considered that it was important to be able always "to find the boundary between anarchism and opportunism (this boundary is relative, shifting and changeable, but it exists)".** The existence of this conditional boundary is also to be seen in the attitude of Right opportunism and Leftism to theory.

2. THOSE WHO WISH TO DO WITHOUT THEORY

A characteristic of pseudo-Leftism, both of the past and the present, is that it usually disregards revolutionary theory. Many generations of "ultra-Left" groups and

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 12, p. 339.

** Ibid., Vol. 15, p. 408.

schools have repeated one and the same thing, namely: "We can do without theory", while the present-day Leftist, felicitously personified in literature, says: "My father is a Communist of the old school and it seems to me that he is incapable of understanding the new language of revolution, which constructs its own theory and at once translates it into reality."**

This Leftist scorn of theory is manifested in various ways. Some Leftists adopt the bravado stand that they need neither theory nor theory-based strategy and tactics. They are content to let themselves be guided by feeling. A student anarchist leader in the USA is quoted as declaring: "I'm a nihilist! I'm proud of it, proud of it! I want to fuck this goddam country. Destroy it! No hope, not in 50 years. Tactics? It's too late. You're dreamers... Let's break what we can..."***

The Leftists believe that for a revolutionary struggle it is quite enough to reject the capitalist order, that it is a waste of time to ponder over how to put an end to capitalism and over what must replace it.

Alain Geismar, boss of the French Maoist organisation, conceitedly declared during the hot days of 1968: "I am not a theorist. I can define socialism only through a negative attitude to existing conditions."****

Georgi Plekhanov wrote, ridiculing attitudes of this sort:

"A wit once said that the anarchists' symbol of faith boils down to two articles of a fantastic law:

"1. There will be nothing.

"2. Nobody is charged with the fulfilment of the preceding paragraph.

* Miguel Otero Silva, *Cuando quiero llorar no lloro*, Barcelona, 1972, p. 181.

** Christopher Lasch, *The Agony of the American Left*, New York, 1969, p. 183.

*** Jacques Sauvageot, Alain Geismar, Daniel Cohn-Bendit, *Aufstand in Paris oder ist in Frankreich eine Revolution möglich?*, Hamburg, 1968, p. 46.

"That is not true. The anarchists say:

"1. There will be everything.

"2. Nobody is charged with concerning himself with what will be—whatever happens."*

Alas, this keen observation has not grown antiquated!

When the tide of the youth movement rose many political ignoramuses felt it was very radical to laud practice "unfettered by theory", to assert that a "revolutionary should not think, he must act". In the unceasing arguments kindled by any issue or occasion hoarse-voiced orators endeavoured to outshout each other without even trying to persuade anybody or come to some sort of understanding. Negation of theory gave scope for endless discourses and, at the same time, for agents of the relevant state agencies for whom it was much easier to work when there was a lack of principles and ideals. This was observed at the continuous and unending referendums, the "general assemblies of all to take all decisions" and the "meetings prolonged for days and nights" held by the Leftists at British universities.**

The "assemblist decision of issues" was in vogue among the Leftists in Italy in 1967-1969. What that came to is described in the Left-bourgeois journal *Il Mulino* by Walter Tobagi, a researcher in problems of the student movement: "It has been proved that the movement founded on the so-called 'assemblist decision of issues' is breaking up, torn by endless internal discord and a 'stampede to the Left'. The movement claiming to offer a revolutionary alternative has paid heavily for three years of errors. . . . But the leaders who made the most serious mistakes managed to escape retribution. It must be noted that the 'collective discussions' and 'assemblies' organised by them give an unquestioned advantage to leaders. It

* G. V. Plekhanov, *Works*, Vol. IV, p. 231 (in Russian).

** Betty Reid, *Ultra-Leftism in Britain*, London, 1969, p. 35.

enables them to cover their irresponsibility with political agility and oratorical eloquence. . . ."

These interminable debates, as conceived by their sponsors, must replace theory or work out a theory "on the run". The dissident French students were guided by the "maxim": "We shall find a theory after we have said all we want to say."

Sham radicalism towards everything in the world, including theory, may seem attractive at moments of acute social collisions. But the revolutionary struggle is by no means an uninterrupted offensive. During periods of a forced retreat, decline or pause, those who acted on impulse, without conviction, inevitably feel discontented and disappointed. In the early 1960s one could read the following lament in anarchist publications: "All anarchists are revolutionaries, but not all have revolutionary programmes." The American sociologist Kenneth Keniston had hundreds of meetings with "Left-radical young people". His attention was drawn by the following words repeated by many of them: "I need more perspective on what I am doing." Some said: "I want to do more reading in history . . . for example, labour history. I don't know about that."***

Upright young people have seen for themselves that the absence of theory leads to uncertainty and irresolution depending on the changes in the political situation. Some of them began to ask approximately the same question that worried one of Bernard Shaw's personages: "Does a ship sail to its destination no better than a log drifts nowhither?"****

The lessons of the setbacks suffered by the Leftist groups are that none of them has a face of its own. Life shows

* *Il Mulino* No. 214, March-April 1971, p. 220.

** Kenneth Keniston, *Young Radicals. Notes on Committed Youth*, New York, 1968, pp. 35, 178.

*** Bernard Shaw, *Man and Superman. A Comedy and a Philosophy*, London, 1931, p. 128.

that without a unifying idea an organisation is transient and fragile. Many Leftist groups collapsed as quickly and suddenly as they mushroomed.

Failure also overcame the Leftist organisations that did not proclaim their intention of doing without theory but tried to sponge on the prestige of the Marxist-Leninist teaching, using individual propositions that suited them and giving this out as an improvement on Marxism.

Lenin wrote that opportunism "can be expressed in terms of any doctrine you like, including Marxism".* The present "Left" revisionists use Marxist terminology in order to turn it against the Communist parties. In this manner they manipulate, for example, with the Marxist proposition on the armed struggle. It is depicted as the sole revolutionary proposition in Marxism. Marxism is reconstructed into a variety of Blanquism and in this falsified shape used to justify conspiratorial tactics and the rejection of all forms of struggle, except the armed struggle.

These manipulators pose as being eager to unite theory, reduced to a simplified pattern, with revolutionary practice as quickly as possible. The French Communists noted that in the 1970s there were many "proponents of Marxism" who attempted to give themselves out as people anxious over Marxism's development through "adaptation".

A maxim fashionable among Leftists is that of "saving Marxism". They accuse the international communist movement of "departing from Marxism".

But even the bourgeois propagandists who encourage the Leftists have to admit that the "new reading" of Marx and "development" of his teaching have boiled down to an apologia of violence, a laudation of the armed struggle always and in all situations. In the anti-communist *Political Critique of Marxism and Neomarxism as the Ideological Foundations of the Student Unrest of 1965-1969*, the

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 18, p. 363.

West German bourgeois sociologist Wolfgang Fikentscher acknowledges that the Leftists have "narrowed Marxism down to a single formula extolling violence employed in the name of some self-asserting justice". He does not conceal his pleasure that "the sense of social indignation brimming in many young people is impelling them towards Neomarxism", but he is worried that "many students are today looking for leadership, advice and assistance from Marxists-Leninists".*

The attempts to distort Marxism from Leftist positions sometimes assume the most bizarre forms. In a book characteristically entitled *For an Anarchist Marxism*, the anarchist Daniel Guérin writes that there are no grounds for dispute between Marxism and anarchism: "I see in them twin brothers drawn into a useless dispute that is turning them into twin enemies. They are two closely related schools of one and the same socialism. Besides, they have a common origin. . . . Their long-term strategy and their end goal are in effect identical."**

He then proceeds to assure his readers that the Revolution of October 1917 in Russia was "anarchist" and that "the coming revolution will be anarcho-Marxist, that it is already such".*** He candidly admits his intention of "contributing" to the quest for a synthesis of Marxism and anarchism, hoping that the formula "anarchists are Marxists" will help his brother-anarchists to extricate themselves from their sectarian isolation from the people.

At the international congress of anarchist "theorists" held in Italy in 1969, many of the speeches were in keeping with the tenets expounded by Guérin. It was asserted that ultimately the anarchists and the Marxists were pursuing the same goals and that it would be beneficial to

* Wolfgang Fikentscher, *Zur politischen Kritik an Marxismus und Neomarxismus als ideologischen Grundlagen der Studentenunruhen 1965/69*, Tübingen, 1971, p. 44.

** Daniel Guérin, *Pour un marxisme libertaire*, Paris, 1969, p. 12.

*** Ibid., p. 9.

"read" the classics of Marxism in such a way as to create the impression that there was an "affinity" between it and anarchism.

But among the ideological pirates attempting to sail under a foreign flag priority belongs to the Trotskyists. Trotsky and his followers found, earlier than other trends hostile to Marxism-Leninism, that in an epoch when Marxist ideas were proliferating triumphantly it was preferable to fight them with the visor closed. Suppressing the lure of political vanity, the Trotskyists go so far as to call their groups and publications Marxist-Leninist, and the fact that they are still Trotskyists is modestly indicated in parenthesis. Their favourite method is to give out Trotskyism for "genuine" Marxism-Leninism undistorted by revisionists.

To this end the revolutionary teaching is reduced to the theory of "permanent revolution" in its Trotskyist interpretation. Although the Trotskyists are not finical about the word "theory", there is, in fact, nothing theoretical in their "permanent revolution". Everything is reduced to two non-historical propositions. The first is that there can never be intermediate aims in the struggle for socialism and, the second, that socialism can only triumph on a global scale.

This simplified pattern also suits adventurists, who are always and everywhere prepared to put forward maximalist slogans while doing nothing to bring the revolution nearer. When the situation is not ripe for a socialist revolution, Gus Hall writes, "shouting abstract slogans about revolution is simply a way of doing nothing. It is a form of political self-hypnosis".* This is the self-hypnosis in which the Trotskyists engage.

The Trotskyist "permanent revolution" has undergone no essential changes since its inception at the turn of the

* Gus Hall, *Imperialism Today. An Evaluation of Major Issues and Events of Our Time*, New York, 1972, p. 95.

century. The world has split into two social systems, the colonial system has crumbled and state-monopoly capitalism has given birth to fascism. The struggle for democracy, which has inspired huge masses of people, has brought the working class of a number of countries into the direct struggle for socialism. But the Trotskyists continue to repeat their dogmas of the early 20th century. This "staunchness" is worthy of mummies, not of theories. To all intents and purposes, Trotskyism has no theory of its own. The only area in which it has "advanced" is in its transition from its rejection of the revolutionary role of the peasants, who, according to the classical Trotskyist pattern, are utterly incapable of fighting for socialism, to the assertion that today 70 per cent of the peasants in the developing states now have a socialist consciousness.* This "conclusion" has nothing in common with theory. It is an indication of the rushing to and fro of the pragmatists, who have found no support in the working class of the industrialised capitalist countries and begun to wander about the world in the hope of attracting attention in the former colonial states.

Small wonder that the Trotskyist organisations constantly experience the effects of their helplessness in theory. Endless discord and bickering, mutual accusations of revisionism, divisions, these are the invariable bed-fellows of sectarian narrowness and theoretical helplessness. The Trotskyist "Fourth International" was founded in 1938. Today there are six "Fourth Internationals" and the protozoan multiplication of Trotskyist organisations continues.

The number of claimants to the role played by the Communist vanguard is beyond count in the history of our century, particularly in recent years. Some appeared on the political horizon only to disappear again, others remained for short time, and still others come to life only during moments of extreme aggravation of social con-

* *European Marxist Review* No. 1, May 1968, pp. 126, 170.

flicts. What opportunist revisionism, tub-thumping petty-bourgeois anarchism and the thousands of combinations of these two trends give out for "latest theory" has been called by Rodney Arismendi the "product of intellectual and tactical mini-thought".*

All these "thinkers" have the support of the ruling classes and of the many tongues of bourgeois propaganda. The only trouble is that their pronouncements are not borne out by historical development. This explains the transience of their "successes" and the confident advance of the Communists united by advanced ideology.

3. DEVELOPING THEORY IS THE UNREMITTING DUTY OF THE COMMUNIST VANGUARD

A distinctive feature of Marxist-Leninist science is its close link with social practice, with the class struggle. Embodied in revolutionary theory is the ideology of the proletariat, which at a certain phase of its development becomes the class expressing the actual requirements of social progress and evolves into the force heading the struggle for the abolition of the capitalist system and the establishment of socialist social relations.

Marxism-Leninism is continuously enriched through its close link with practice. In the same way as social life does not stop for a moment, theoretical thought, which brings to light the laws governing it, develops uninterruptedly. As any other science, social science "must not imagine truth in the form of dead repose, in the form of a bare picture (image), pale (matt), without impulse, without motion".**

In our dynamic epoch of signally turbulent social processes and rapidly changing attitudes and notions it is becoming increasingly necessary for revolutionary theory

* Rodney Arismendi, *Lenin, the Revolution and Latin America*, p. 30 (Russian translation).

** V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 38, pp. 194-95.

to develop just as dynamically. There is today a special urgency in Lenin's words that revolutionary theory should not be regarded as "something completed and inviolable", that "socialists *must* develop" theory "in all directions if they wish to keep pace with life".*

Small wonder that the very problem of how to develop theory, which has always held a key place in the ideological struggle of the revolutionary Marxists against revisionism, is today becoming exceptionally acute.

While making the pretence of being "concerned" about the development of theory, the Right revisionists are peddling the insidious and shoddy idea about "open Marxism". The very purpose of this term is to create the impression that Marxism is a closed, narrow and sectarian teaching fencing itself off from everything taking place outside it. But there is no hint of sectarian narrowness in the history of Marxism or at the present phase of its development. "Marxism," Lenin wrote in 1920, "has won its historic significance as the ideology of the revolutionary proletariat because, far from rejecting the most valuable achievements of the bourgeois epoch, it has, on the contrary, assimilated and refashioned everything of value in the more than two thousand years of the development of human thought and culture."**

Lenin urged further work in this direction, work inspired by the practical experience of the dictatorship of the proletariat and, to extend this idea to our day, by the practical experience of world socialism and the liberation struggle throughout the world. Long before the Great October Socialist Revolution Lenin noted that no progress could be made in the study of new economic phenomena without drawing upon the works of bourgeois scholars. This is true not only of economics. To this day the Communist parties do not ignore the results of research by bourgeois sociologists and do not reject elements of ratio-

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 4, pp. 211-12.

** Ibid., Vol. 31, p. 317.

nal thought in the books of the New Left. On the contrary, Marxism has never been a fossilised theory. It is a living, developing theory.

It is thus not a matter of "opening" Marxism but of what is meant by this term. Let us give the floor to Roger Garaudy. He urges "integrating the vast heritage of research and discoveries, which may be made in other schools of philosophical thought, albeit, they may possibly be wrong or pursue alien aims".* This standard-bearer of "open Marxism" specifies: he suggests "integrating" Marxism, existentialism, neoFichteanism and religious postulates. He is prepared not to shun any "discovery" for his variegated garb ... quite like Flaubert notes in his correspondence: "How I passionately collected pearls for my necklace! The only thing I forgot was the thread."***

When Lenin wrote about using the works of bourgeois economists he made it plain that it was necessary "to be able to lop off their reactionary tendency, to pursue our own line and to combat the whole line of the forces and classes hostile to us".***

The revisionists jettison the class thread in their eagerness to borrow the thoughts of others. Whereas Garaudy still uses the words "integrating Marxism", Ernst Fischer rejoiced in advance that in the contest of class antipodal ideas "it may happen that one of the competing ideas admits its untenability and will be corrected by its opponent".**** Here, without beating about the bush, "integrating Marxism" becomes Marxism's integration in bourgeois and reformist ideology. This, properly speaking, is the substance of Right revisionism.

Refusal to enrich Marxism with new conclusions stem-

* Roger Garaudy, *Marxismus im 20. Jahrhundert*, Hamburg, 1969, p. 168.

** Gustave Flaubert, *Correspondence*, revised and augmented, Second Series (1847-1852), Paris, s.a., p. 345.

*** V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 14, p. 343.

**** *Weg und Ziel*, 23. Jahrgang, No. 5, Vienna, May 1965, p. 355.

ming from the new experience of the class struggle and the constantly changing conditions of social life may also be regarded as a kind of revision of Marxism-Leninism. If the conclusions drawn under certain historical conditions are not reconsidered when these conditions change, only the external form of the revolutionary theory remains, while its inner content disappears. Obsolete propositions turn into abstractions, into dead dogmas incapable of explaining anything and helpless to serve as a guide in the revolutionary struggle. By its very essence the Marxist-Leninist teaching cannot be dogmatic because it sets its sights on the future and regards the social laws it brings to light primarily through the actions of people, the class struggle and social practice.

To slow the development of Marxism-Leninism, even under cover of "revolutionary" talk, means to revise its essence. Those who pride themselves on never changing their notions may be answered with the words of Victor Hugo: to praise such a person "is tantamount to eulogising water for remaining stagnant, or a tree for having withered".*

Historical practice has entirely borne out the laws of social development brought to light and substantiated by Marxism-Leninism, but this does not mean that ready-made answers have been found for all occasions in life. These answers must be sought in keeping with the underlying principles of revolutionary theory and on the basis of a profound understanding of social practice. The decisions passed at the congresses of the CPSU and other fraternal Marxist-Leninist parties and the documents of the international meetings of Communist and Workers' parties are eloquent examples of this creative attitude to revolutionary theory.

Inattention to theoretical problems and belated elabo-

* André Maurois, *Olympio ou la vie de Victor Hugo*, Paris, 1955, p. 194.

rations of new problems inescapably affect practical work. This is true of the entire spectrum of theoretical problems, including the teaching on the Party.

Considerable progress has been made by the international communist movement in recent years in the study of problems of the building and development of the Marxist-Leninist parties in the light of the obtaining conditions of the class struggle. Much has been done towards enriching the notions about the enhanced leading role of the Communist parties, about their development as revolutionary vanguards and, simultaneously, as democratic organisations, their massive character and their relations with other democratic organisations. The Leninist principle of democratic centralism has been developed in a sharp struggle with Right and "Left" revisionism.

The conditions under which Marxist-Leninist theory has been and continues to be enriched have given further confirmation that the theory of struggle can itself develop only in struggle, that a universal theory which is not confined by national boundaries can grow richer only if it draws upon international experience and not solely upon the experience of one country.

Engels wrote in no uncertain terms of his disapproval of the British socialist organisation, which had contrived to turn Marx's theory of development into a "rigid orthodoxy, which the workers are not to reach as a result of their class consciousness, but which, like an article of faith, is to be forced down their throats at once and without development".*

Marxist-Leninist theory cannot be simply learned by rote, much less learned once and for all. If theory passes through the agony of struggle, the test of militant practice, it becomes the inherent element without which no revolutionary party can exist, a constant ferment stimulating the

* Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *Selected Correspondence*, Moscow, 1975, p. 448.

ideological atmosphere in the Party and its ability to feel the pulse of life. "Russia," Lenin wrote in 1920, "achieved Marxism—the only correct revolutionary theory—through the *agony* she experienced in the course of half a century of unparalleled torment and sacrifice, of unparalleled revolutionary heroism, incredible energy, devoted searching, study, practical trial, disappointment, verification, and comparison with European experience."*

Lenin noted that revolutionary Russia had more international links and was much better informed about global forms and theories of the revolutionary movement than any other country in the world. This is what in many ways explains the outstanding role played by the Bolshevik Party and its founder and leader, Lenin, in developing Marxist theory in keeping with the conditions created by imperialism, and the constant need, inherent in the CPSU, for developing theory in the context of the worldwide experience of the class struggle.

Today, with the internationalisation of the struggle against imperialism progressing steadily, absolutisation of the experience of only one country is always fraught with the danger of dogmatic errors and revisionist distortions. Take, for instance, some initial specifics of the Cuban revolution of 1959, whose chronicle begins with the storming of the Moncada Barracks on July 26, 1953 and the two-year guerilla war initiated by the Movement of July 26. The revisionists have used these specifics in an effort to prove that the Cuban experience refutes the Marxist-Leninist proposition on the need for a Party armed with revolutionary theory as the leading force of the revolution.

The leaders of the Cuban revolution very quickly passed to the merging of different organisations, first into the United Party of the Cuban Socialist Revolution and then into the Communist Party of Cuba, which is guided by the principles of Marxism-Leninism. The strengthening of pre-

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 31, pp. 25-26.

cisely that Party was the decisive factor of the further victories of the socialist revolution in Cuba, of the successful surmounting of innumerable difficulties, and of the building of the new society in direct proximity to the United States of America.

The practice of the socialist revolution in Cuba is a noteworthy contribution to the experience of the international communist movement, an experience showing the diversity of the forms that the struggle for the new society may assume depending on historical conditions and the character of a given country. "One may certainly say that the revolutionary process in Cuba is testimony of the extraordinary strength of the ideas of Marx, Engels and Lenin."^{*}

The understanding that correct theoretical conclusions and the corresponding practice may arise not on the basis of limited experience but as a result of a scientific study of world revolutionary development is penetrating deeper into the international communist movement. The Communists see in this a condition preventing one-sided attitudes and the elevation of one's own experience into an absolute. At the 10th Congress of the League of Communists of Yugoslavia in May 1974 Josip Broz Tito said: "Today we must study the experience of other working-class, communist and liberation movements and also the processes and results of present-day Marxist thought in the world on a much larger scale than hitherto."^{**}

Although theoretical work requires specialised knowledge it is not isolated from the work of the Party. On the contrary, it is an inseparable part of its work; more, it is the ideological core of this work. Lenin had this in mind when he noted that one could not be a revolutionary Social-Democrat without taking part, to the best of one's

^{*} *El Futuro es el internacionalismo. Recorrido del comandante Fidel Castro por países de Africa y Europa socialista, 3 de mayo-5 de julio de 1972, Havana, 1972, p. 353.*

^{**} *Borba, May 28, 1974.*

ability, in elaborating and applying revolutionary teaching.^{*}

When in a theory something is not elaborated, one hears the question: Is it necessary to adhere so much to theory? Yet it will not enter anybody's head to stop using a watch only because it is fast or slow. An effort is made to adjust the watch.

It is the constant concern of the Party and one of the prime tasks of all its organisations to improve its scientific analysis of reality and develop theory. "Testing the validity of theory," Gus Hall wrote, "must not be an annual inventory. The testing cannot be separated from its daily application. The struggle for the purity of Marxism-Leninism must not be left only to some special conference, to a special cadre, or to special books. It must not be separated from the revolutionary practice. It is an everyday task for all of the revolutionary cadre."^{***}

A trustworthy theory not only gives the correct orientation in practical revolutionary work but is of the utmost importance for the success of the struggle against bourgeois ideology. With the growth of the ideological struggle the steady enrichment of revolutionary theory acquires increasing significance for a Party aspiring to be the vanguard. Lenin stressed that a principled approach must be adopted to all political events, unlike the bourgeoisie, who "actually despise all theory and are afraid of any class analysis of recent history."^{***}

Although the bourgeois book market is swamped with publications claiming to be scientific studies, nothing has altered nor could have altered in the attitude of the bourgeois ideologists to social science. True science is against capitalism. For that reason, despite the innumerable social science research centres in the capitalist countries, these

^{*} V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 21, p. 354.

^{**} *World Marxist Review*, June 1974, pp. 13-14.

^{***} V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 12, p. 212.

centres can explain various phenomena only in the context of current interests and offer pseudo-arguments and material as a counter to communist ideology. It is not accidental that when there is an aggravation of social or inter-imperialist contradictions in the capitalist world, bourgeois scholars usually admit their theoretical helplessness.

The Communists use their unfading ideological weapon to oppose unprincipled pragmatism and all manifestations of bourgeois ideology. The Address "Centenary of the Birth of Vladimir Ilyich Lenin", adopted at the 1969 International Meeting of Communist and Workers' Parties, underscores the importance of studying Lenin's works and notes: "Marxist-Leninist theory and its creative application in specific conditions permit scientific answers to be found to the questions facing all contingents of the world revolutionary movement, wherever they are active."*

* *International Meeting of Communist and Workers' Parties, Moscow 1969, p. 41.*

CHARACTER OF THE VANGUARD'S ORGANISATION

There are questions that retain their importance over a long period, their acuteness unabating and even intensifying with a change of the situation. One of these, which concerns the political Party of the working class, is the question of organisation.

No political trend claiming to be revolutionary can evade the problem of how to organise itself in order to translate its ideas into action, into reality. Marxism-Leninism has not only given the ideology and programme of struggle for the new society but also determined the character of the organisational weapon capable of clearing the way for this programme.

While giving priority to the political over the organisational element, Marxism-Leninism does not set these elements apart. It considers them in close unity. Unification is inseparable from its ideological foundation.

As a direct manifestation of the unity between revolutionary theory and revolutionary practice, the unity of political and organisational elements explains the immense role that is invariably accorded to organisational problems in the ideological struggle waged to this day by the Marxists-Leninists.

It has almost become the rule that many revisionist trends, in their helplessness to offer anything to counter the basic ideas of Marxism-Leninism, attack its organisational principles in the hope of destroying its ideology by deforming its organisation. In *One Step Forward, Two Steps Back*, written in 1904, Lenin quoted Kautsky, who wrote: "There is perhaps no other question on which revisionism in all countries, despite its multiplicity of form and hue, is so alike as on the question of organisation."*

During the many decades that have passed since then, Right and "Left" revisionism has assumed the most diverse forms, but in everything concerning Marxist-Leninist organisational principles their arguments have remained amazingly monotonous and unsusceptible of change. One can compare the present-day attacks on the organisational principles of the communist movement with what was said in the distant past by the anarchists, Russian Mensheviks and Western Social-Democrats, and if one does not indicate the source even the most experienced reader will not always guess the date and author of a given pronouncement.

1. "PRINCIPLED ADVERSARIES" OF ORGANISATION OF ANY KIND

Organisation always begins with a division of labour and with the centralisation of the leadership's functions. This is to be observed in the economic sphere and in all areas of social life.

As production grows more complex, increasing importance is acquired by the division of labour and the need for the centralisation of the leadership. This objective process has always evoked protests from the forces that wanted to preserve outdated forms of the economy and therefore

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 7, p. 401.

idealised the patriarchal orders in opposition to what was inexorably brought by economic and social progress. Nineteenth-century petty-bourgeois economic romanticism regarded any centralisation of production as signifying reaction, retrogression and the destruction of mankind. Progress, freedom and happiness were associated with the preservation of a small-scale decentralised economy. To this day there are many philistines prepared to extol the time-worn foundations of individualism, portray the scientific and technological revolution as bringing nothing save environmental pollution and seeing in the appearance of large-scale centralised industrial complexes nothing save a threat to the free development of the individual.

In addition to this total non-acceptance of progressive development of production, some claimants to the role of ideologists reject all forms of organised social life. Organisational infantilism has now been grafted upon what was once called economic romanticism. Although economic romanticism is today regarded as patently archaic, the attacks on clear-cut organisational principles in social life are frequently given out as something new, as the latest word. Of course, if this something new is put in its perspective as having been forgotten long ago, one may be moved by the "boldness" and "novelty" of the attacks directed against those organisational principles without which political revolutionary activity cannot count on success. But of the inventors of present-day anti-organisational theories it may be said that they have not so much forgotten the past as try to ignore it altogether in the belief that history can only be a fetter and a hindrance to the appropriation of the title of trailblazer.

Nonetheless, just because somebody ignores history it does not mean that there is no history. If we turn to the beginning of the 20th century when Lenin fought for the organisational principles of the revolutionary vanguard, we shall find that his criticism of anarchist individualism is today applicable to the latter-day critics of organisation

and discipline. Of those who set at naught the organisational alphabet of the revolutionary struggle, Lenin wrote: "He thinks of the Party organisation as a monstrous 'factory'; he regards the subordination of the part to the whole and of the minority to the majority as 'serfdom'. ...; division of labour under the direction of a centre evokes from him a tragicomical outcry against transforming people into 'cogs and wheels'."*

These opponents of "serfdom" have carried over to this day their intransigent hatred of any form of united labour and centralised leadership. Today the anarchists laud the "autonomous" man with the same zeal as their predecessors. In a book entitled *In Defence of Anarchism* Robert P. Wolff runs down every sort of leadership, explaining: "When I place myself in the hands of another, and permit him to determine the principles by which I shall guide my behaviour, I repudiate the freedom and reason which give me dignity."**

To the definition of human dignity as meaning solely the repudiation of jointly worked out norms and the possibility of acting according to the dictates of one's own will, Wolff adds: he may act at somebody else's dictates not because he is told to do this or that but only because he has himself decided to act in that manner. He thus rejects subordination to the opinion of the majority and concepts such as discipline, and urges that people should do what they feel like doing. Lenin's definition that a principle "'only from below' is an anarchist principle"*** remains entirely applicable today. While eagerly accepting the compliments paid to their innovations, the new radicals, of whom so many have appeared during the past decades, repeat the pronouncements of their predecessors

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 7, p. 392.

** Robert P. Wolff, *In Defence of Anarchism*, New York, 1970, p. 72.

*** V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 8, p. 477.

almost word for word: "Leaders mean organisation, organisation means hierarchy, and hierarchy is undemocratic. It connotes bureaucracy and impersonality."*

Non-acceptance of organisation has reached such a large scale that it is now even noted in the New Programme of the Communist Party of the USA: "As a consequence, some rebels see organisation itself as evil, as an inescapable curse of bureaucracy. But to elevate non-organisation to a principle is to concede the battle in advance."**

The anarchist rejects organisation in any form. He may be likened to the literary personage whom fear of death drove to suicide. Rejection of organisation through fear of the danger of bureaucracy is tantamount to political suicide. It alienates the individual deliberately and for all time from the collective and from joint action.

It is, of course, impossible to keep in the saddle of total negation of organisation. Here compromise comes to the rescue.

Thus arise attempts to preserve the anarchist conception that rejects large-scale organisation but allows a revolutionary organisation to consist of small, intimate groups that are independent from each other. These groups call themselves differently: "fraternities", "revolutionary teams" and even "revolutionary gangs". The anarchists are aware of the helplessness of this sort of "organisation" in the modern world and they do not set their mini-organisations any far-reaching aims. Their purpose, as it is portrayed, is to act as catalyzers of spontaneous actions. The French anarchist Jacques Sauvageot argues: "Organisational problems are of no particular importance. It would be dangerous to display application and perseverance in questions of centralisation and coordination, especially if

* Paul Jacobs and Saul Landau, *The New Radicals. A Report with Documents*, New York, 1965, p. 31.

** New Programme of the Communist Party USA, New York, 1970, p. 120.

this in any way obstructs spontaneity, which is the driving force of movement."^{*} A group calling itself Internationale Situationiste rejects the need for any revolutionary organisations and demands the direct self-expression of the people's will, without leaders and parties.

To be consistent, the anarchists should reject even the groups, fraternities, gangs and so on, which they nonetheless recognise. After all, a small organisation is also an organisation. But the logic of the young lady who sinned and believed that her sin was not very grave because the baby was small evidently suits these champions of the "autonomous individual". It seems to them that innocence will be maintained if the creation of anarchist groups is accompanied by a multitude of reservations. The leaders of the anarchists in the USA hold that groups must be independent and ideologically demarcated one from the other. They say that "each of us is a Cohn-Bendit".^{**}

While they are organisationally helpless, these principled adversaries of organisation are by no means averse to discussing the "obsolescence" of democratic centralism without even noticing that the words they use have been put into their mouths by somebody else. Interviewed by the British Trotskyist newspaper *Workers Press*, Rudi Dutschke, a former leader of a West German Left Radical student organisation said: "...the history of democratic centralism speaks against this type of organisation. For Russia, I have nothing against democratic centralism. For Lenin it was correct; from 1903 it was the only type. ... It is not right for an advanced capitalist country where it is possible to develop direct democracy permanently."^{***} The 1960s demonstrated that the "development of direct democracy permanently" did not go beyond disorderly, scattered actions and endless argument.

^{*} Jacques Sauvageot, Alain Geismar, Daniel Cohn-Bendit, *Aufstand in Paris oder ist in Frankreich eine Revolution möglich?*, p. 20.

^{**} Adrien Dansette, *Mai 1968*, p. 76.

^{***} *Workers Press*, April 8, 1971.

The progressive French author Robert Merle has pertinently characterised the anarchist attitude to organisation in the 1960s, writing: "Bear in mind, comrade, the anarchist says in his invitation to join his organisation, that we have no leaders. At most the mouthpieces of our ideas are loudspeakers, nothing more. They cannot adopt decisions. ... Precisely this is democracy ... respect for spontaneous decisions, for the creative potentiality of each, for the multiplicity of tendencies."^{*}

And this is how the student who has not pondered seriously over anything and does not wish to be responsible for anything explains his sympathy for the anarchists: "I shall go with the anarchists. You don't have to join them or pay membership dues. They detest every form of bureaucracy. If you wish to go with them, you are welcome. If you wish to leave them, nobody will stop you. ...

"You see, I don't give a hang ... for all those Bakunins and anarchist theories. What I like about the anarchists is how they behave. They do not sacrifice personal happiness. There are no taboos, shackles, bureaucracy. They cannot care less for organisation; they do what they like."^{**}

What particularly attracted this student was that at anarchist meetings those who had no wish to enter into discussions hummed. He regarded this humming as very nearly the highest manifestation of democracy and freedom of the individual. Of course, these political ignoramuses stay with anarchism very briefly, under the impact of fashion, of growing social ferment. They depart from the anarchist shore as easily as they had moored themselves to it. But for all this, anarchism does not disappear. Its virus is tenacious, and even if the conditions are not felicitous for an epidemic it nevertheless

^{*} Robert Merle, *Derrière la vitre*, Paris, 1970, p. 46.

^{**} *Ibid.*, pp. 166, 167-68.

poisons people's minds day after day, constantly breeding a suspicious attitude to the existing organisations of the working people, notably to the Marxist-Leninist parties.

Under the guise of being opposed to the "apparatus", to "bureaucracy", the anarchists attack the Party as a centralised organisation. Their sermons about "direct democracy" and their outcries "against the Party hierarchy" are in fact attacks against the Leninist principles of Party construction.

By savagely attacking inner-Party discipline and what they biliously call "the fetish of organisation with its rules and exhortations for revolutionary discipline"* they play chiefly on the mood and feeling of individualism and the self-admiration of people scorning the spirit of collectivism and comradeship. For instance, the French anarchist journal *Noir et rouge* wrote that there were two conceptions of organisation: anarchist and bureaucratic. Unable to say anything coherent about the essence of the anarchist conception, the journal makes a bugbear of the communist conception, which it traditionally depicts as a synonym of bureaucracy.

But even the anarchists understand that nihilistic negation can give nothing. They therefore devise the means against bureaucratisation not by utterly rejecting organisation as such, but by transferring the market principle of the strong swallowing the weak to politics. It thus turns out that a host of tiny groups is not an everlasting phenomenon. Their multiplication fosters "free competition of ideas", "healthy competition" between groups, big and small. This, the anarchists believe, will ultimately place some group in the leadership, and it will absorb all and become a "genuinely revolutionary party".

A West Berlin organisation that propounds such views recorded in its "programme": "No revolutionary Party of the proletariat can be formed by the centralist method. In

* *Politische Studien* No. 201, January-February 1972, p. 75.

the course of the ideological disputes one of the existing groups or one of the main organisations will win the right to lead the other groups on a national scale. The leading nucleus of the Party will be created on the basis of recognition of this right to leadership."*

However, in the same "programme" it is acknowledged that "none of the groups have a clear or coherent ideology or political guideline, let alone the ability to lay claim to ideological leadership or the prerequisites for working out such a programme in the shape of theoretical works".**

The pattern "from groups to a Party" is, of course, no longer orthodox anarchism. Properly speaking, this primordial anarchism today exists only in the imagination of its high priests, who argue about the absolute freedom of the individual and the possible ways and means of preserving individualism in present-day society. But, it turns out that ambitions are not altogether alien to anarchists, those principled enemies of leadership and organisation. While attacking the vanguard role of the Communist parties they are by no means averse to proclaiming their small groups "vanguard" or "pre-vanguard" organisations. In January 1972 the US press reported that there were more than a thousand of these pseudo-vanguards. In West Germany there are innumerable organisations, each of which claims that it "is the only legitimate vanguard organisation".*** In West Berlin, a group of about 20 students proclaimed the establishment of "an organisation, whose purpose is to form a Communist Party".**** In the 1960s and 1970s similar "vanguard" or "pre-vanguard" groups mush-

* *Die Partei Aufbauen, Plattformen, Grundsatzklärungen*, (West) Berlin, 1971, p. 118.

** *Ibid.*, p. 129.

*** *Darum Kommunist*, "Gespräch mit einem jungen Kommunisten über seine Erfahrungen bei den Linksoportunisten", Frankfurt on the Main, 1971, p. 6.

**** *Die Partei Aufbauen, Plattformen, Grundsatzklärungen*, p. 138.

roomed in France, Britain, Belgium, Italy, Canada, Japan and some other capitalist countries.

The harm of anarchism lies, of course, not in abstract arguments about the vices of bureaucracy or even in naive claims to a vanguard role, but in the poison of nihilism that it injects in the minds of the new elements drawn into the social struggle, chiefly young people, in its subversion of faith in revolutionary organisations, in its preaching of futile extremism. At the 13th Congress of the Italian Communist Party in March 1972 Gian Carlo Pajetta said that the Italian Communists denounced "not only as sterile and sometimes ludicrously grotesque but also as harmful the false 'vanguards', the groups that always objectively, and frequently not only objectively, play a provocative role. These groups must be isolated and fought".*

Anarchism has inflicted immense harm on the New Left movement. It infiltrated into the ranks of that movement and prevented its organisational crystallisation and coalescence with the revolutionary vanguard of the working class. The organisational weakness and "principled" fragmentation of the different schools of radical intellectuals were one of the reasons this movement quite quickly exhausted itself and virtually retired from the scene.

The New Lefts clung to the fragmentation of their movement, fearing its organisational development. Even those who appreciated the need for some sort of centre, for coordinated efforts, went to all lengths to ensure themselves against the threat of being accused of centralism and of aspiring for leadership. The proposal for setting up in the USA a Students for Democratic Society centre contained the following reservations: "The New Left's diversity and decentralisation is one of its greatest strengths and should be supported and aided in every way. Those who, consciously or not, adopt a 'Leninist' concept of po-

* XIII Congresso del Partito comunista italiano. *Atti e risoluzioni*, Rome, 1972, p. 228.

litical organisation offer structural or administrative solutions for political and ideological problems. . . . We do not propose 'democratic centralism' or highly disciplined structures when we assert the need for a radical centre."*

This naive sundering of ideological from organisational problems instead of considering them in their unity, this divorce which reduces every good resolution to empty talk is one of the many manifestations of anarchist influence in present-day reality. Anarchism has many faces and it cannot be otherwise. By extolling individualism it announces, as it were, that it can undergo the most diverse, "individual", so to speak, modifications. This makes it obvious that the Marxist-Leninist parties, which are uncompromisingly opposed to any kind of anarchism, can and must adopt a differentiated attitude to its proponents.

Throughout its history anarchism has grievously injured the working-class movement and the struggle of the proletariat's potential allies. By sowing hostility for revolutionary leaders, for organisation, and lauding spontaneous feeling and revolutionary instincts it helped the governing class against the organised working-class movement in many cases. To this day the bourgeoisie readily takes part in spreading the anarchist slander against the communist movement as widely as possible. But anarchism can attract credulous people protesting against the suppression of the individual by modern capitalism and prepared to fight for justice.

The Communist parties emphatically condemn anarchism as a dangerous and specious ideology, but they do not close their eyes to the fact that in anarchist or anarchism-infected groups there are sincere, anxious people who can shed their illusions. The stand of the US Communists is that in "rejecting petty-bourgeois radicalism we do not need to reject or ignore the positive contributions many of these groups have made. We need not condemn

* Paul Jacobs and Saul Landau, *op. cit.*, p. 279.

individuals when we reject the concepts of petty-bourgeois radicalism".*

The fact that following the wave of petty-bourgeois radicalism of the close of the 1960s almost all Communist parties were reinforced with young people who understood the futility and harm of anarchist ideas and saw that the strength of the revolutionary movement lay in its organisation is evidence that the Communists are not only able to fight anarchism but also win over the finest people led astray by the anarchists.

2. IN IDEOLOGICAL CAPTIVITY TO BOURGEOIS DEMOCRACY

Communist organisation is attacked not only by the anarchists. It does not suit also those who want to see the Communist Party not a militant political vanguard pursuing the aim of abolishing the capitalist system but an organisation fitting into the habitual framework of bourgeois society. The Right opportunists, for whom the political arrangement of this society, with its large number of parties, ideological pluralism and election fights is the model, cannot reconcile themselves to the fact that the Communist Party is organised along quite different principles. The communist notions about inner-Party democracy have nothing in common with the norms of bourgeois democracy. All the attacks from the Right on the Communist Party's organisational principles, regardless of the trappings in which they are presented, are, essentially speaking, an apologia of the bourgeois organisation of society. If there is an opposition it means that there is democracy. Unity without opposition, without factions is condemned in advance as undemocratic. In the last resort they are prepared to acknowledge that this "undemocratic

* *Political Affairs* No. 10, October 1970, p. 7.

ocratic unity" met with the conditions of the revolutionary struggle in tsarist Russia, but on no account do they allow for attempts to apply it to present-day "democratic" Europe.

The French Left Radical André Gorz speaks at length about the role of the revolutionary Party in his platonic discourses about the society of the future and the ways and means of building it. Despite his allegedly radical views, he is in fact held captive by bourgeois ideas about political pluralism and rejects the Party of the new type. He wants a "new type" of Party of the new type, and urges that "the Party should become the place of free discussion and direct democracy.... In other words, today the revolutionary Party of the new type cannot imitate the Leninist pattern".*

True, Gorz recognises the need for a centralised organisation, but he regards it as an inevitable evil, inevitable because it is impossible to do without a centre, which collates experience, coordinates action and maps out the political and strategic line relative to the bourgeois state. But why is it an evil if indeed the aim is to struggle and not to mark time in argument? It is an evil, Gorz explains, because it mirrors the need for centralising the cause of revolution, whose end goal is to abolish the centralised state in all its forms.

Although Gorz cannot fail to be aware that the abolition of the centralised state is still a matter of the very distant future, he makes haste to warn that the centralised organisation of the Party must be regarded as a transitional structure. He believes that already today it must be preached that if a Party wishes to be really revolutionary it must be prepared to dissolve in the mass movement, and to renounce all hierarchal structures, all division between the leaders and the led.

He repeats the assertion that all centralisation is tanta-

* André Gorz, *Réforme et révolution*, Paris, 1969, pp. 54-55.

mount to bureaucratisation and suggests replacing centralisation with "direct democracy" in the Party without, as a matter of fact, explaining what he has in mind. But by the logic of his arguments it is obvious that he reduces "direct democracy" to political pluralism.

The fact that the architects of such abstract arguments are not averse to proclaiming themselves Marxists only makes them more dangerous. People like Gorz quickly become very attractive for the Right revisionists in the Communist parties who borrow from these "independent Marxists" the arguments they use against Leninism.

A method often used by the Right revisionists is hypocritically to pay compliments to Leninism and, at the same time, make it clear that Lenin's genius lay in the fact that he saw and acted in accordance with solely Russian reality. Ernst Fischer and Franz Marek quote copiously from Lenin's *One Step Forward, Two Steps Back*, but they do so only in order to say: "... Later, under quite different conditions, these formulae, deduced from the situation obtaining in Russia at the time, were destructively abused."^{*}

Looking back over the history of the communist movement, the revisionists explain in self-justification that when one definition or another originating in Russia was used in other countries and under different conditions than in Russia it ultimately led to adverse consequences. What were these consequences? A categorical renunciation of factions. The absence of factions means the non-existence of the so dearly loved bourgeois democracy.

According to Fischer, internal unity is not what the Party must aspire for but, on the contrary, something it must at all costs avoid. If no divergences exist they must be created. He advocates the formation of "pressure groups" in the Party which "jointly propound a view that

^{*} Ernst Fischer, Franz Marek, *Was Lenin wirklich Sagte*, p. 32.

does not harmonise with the attitude of the leadership (or the majority in the leadership)".^{*}

For the revisionists the creation of factions is an end in itself. Afraid to call things by their names, Fischer renamed factions into "pressure groups", thereby "sounding the alarm" that without them the Party would become "a drilling ground for military discipline" and that instead of a movement there would be "an iron-bound torrent". Fischer tried hard not to look like a banal opponent of revolutionary partisanship, but the florid phrases that he frequently used to cover the trivial ideas of a bourgeois democrat could not create even the semblance of something new.

Purely verbal exercises never prove anything. However, florid verbiage cannot be resisted by any of the proponents of carrying over bourgeois democracy into the workers' party. Franz Marek, for instance, who is addicted to rare words, made the following comparison: the Party rules of the Communists, he alleged, were "erratic boulders that survived geological periods".^{**} The banning of factions is thus equated to boulders carried over great distances by glaciers and consisting of rocks that do not occur in the given localities. A comparison carries with it its obligations. By extension of Marek's logic, capitalism, for the battle against which the parties of the new type have emerged, is likewise something in the nature of a geological period. But what about the present period? One is not given a very clear picture, but it is apparently such that the revolutionary struggle may be replaced by bourgeois democracy. What loud words, what "significant" comparisons, and all in order to express nostalgia for what the Social-Democrats have been preaching for a long time. The revisionists, who are so proud of their innovations and scornfully reject the

^{*} Ernst Fischer, op. cit., p. 43.

^{**} *Weg und Ziel*, November 1969, p. 537.

"boulders carried over from other epochs", are themselves actually returning to the days when no Communist parties existed.

For example, *Wiener Tagebuch*, mouthpiece of the Austrian revisionists, carried the assertion that the creation of central leading Party organs could only have damaging consequences. It carried an article by Professor Oskar Negt of West Germany, who went so far as to lump together every kind of centralised leadership—whether of a revolutionary Party or, as he put it, of industrialised society. "Our aim must be to put an end to the institutions of discipline and power, these socio-psychological pillars of capitalist industrialised society."*

Theodoro Petkoff, who was expelled from the Communist Party of Venezuela, spoke in a somewhat different vein but with similar venom. He, too, is given space in *Wiener Tagebuch*. "We," he writes, "prefer a horizontal structure and want to demolish the pyramidal structure." He urges the following "innovation": Party members "at a factory or some section are invited by others, and there they argue or act together, display all sorts of initiative, and they must take no notice of any leadership."**

The revisionists close their eyes to the present aggravation of the class struggle and beguile themselves with the illusion that by itself, without struggle and conflict, the development of democracy will lead to socialism, and along these lines seek to reduce the workers' Party to a harmless association alien to any integral philosophy and discipline, to the struggle against oppressors and to dedicated service in the cause of the great goal of socialism.

Friedl Fűrberg, member of the Political Bureau of

* *Wiener Tagebuch*, June 1973, p. 17.

** *Wiener Tagebuch*, April 1972, p. 21.

the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Austria, has convincingly shown the type of democracy wanted by those who see its external manifestation in factions. Criticising Fischer and Marek, he wrote: "Factions strangle inner-Party democracy. They make it impossible to conduct a constructive discussion in which all arguments are weighed. Opposing programmes and, later, even unprincipled groups are all that appear. Instead of ensuring an honest and open battle of opinions, factions logically lead to a power struggle in the Party. They are embryos of division, which they frequently bring about. Everywhere the Communist parties are waging a bitter and difficult struggle. If they disintegrate into factions and waste their strength on the struggle between factions they become unable to come anywhere near carrying out their tasks."*

But this is precisely what the revisionists want. Is it necessary, they argue, to have tasks and a distinct character? Would it not be better to be like all the other parties in bourgeois society? The cherished hope of the bourgeoisie is that the Communist parties should be denuded of their Marxist-Leninist substance, acquire a different image and become like all the other parties. This is precisely the aim of the revisionists. All their actions, objectively in any case and mostly deliberate, are directed towards turning the Communist Party into a conventional party of bourgeois society, a party conducting an election struggle and desisting from going beyond the framework of the existing system.

While echoing the tales that because the Communist parties do not recognise factions they are undemocratic, the revisionists, in line with the conventions of bourgeois "respectable society", avoid entering into a discussion of what the inner-party democracy of the notorious democratic parties embodies. It would seem that nothing could

* *Weg und Ziel*, June 1969, p. 310.

be more effective than to compare the Communists' lack of democracy to the free play of forces in the "free parties". But this is studiously circumvented.

Although the inner workings of the bourgeois parties are closely guarded as the commercial secret of any bourgeois enterprise, something filters to the surface, and this "something" is very instructive.

Here are, for example, particulars of the inner life of the French Union of Democrats for the Republic. It held its Sixth Congress in Nantes in November 1973, and in the handouts prepared for the congress it was stated that there were over 240,000 members. Of these 19 per cent were heads of commercial or industrial enterprises, 31 per cent were middle managerial personnel, 12 per cent were people following liberal professions and senior managerial personnel, 16 per cent were workers, 11 per cent were pensioners or rentiers, 7 per cent were farmers and 4 per cent were a miscellaneous group.

Even these official statistics plainly indicate that the UDR is, above all, a party of the bourgeoisie. The percentage of top managerial personnel, entrepreneurs and people of liberal professions is double the average in France as a whole, while that of workers is far below the percentage of workers in the total population.

But even these statistics are embellished. On November 17, 1973 *Le Monde* offered the opinion that the UDR's membership did not exceed 150,000, and this meant that the percentage of people from the privileged strata was much higher, for the overstatement of the membership by 90,000 covered people from the working strata.

The delegates to the congress were not elected. Under the accepted procedure every member was supposed to have the right to attend the congress. But to obtain this right, one had to have one's name in the department list of delegates drawn up personally by the federal secretary of the departmental organisation. The number of

seats allotted to each federation was established by the party's general secretary.

Under the procedure for the congress the main debates took place in the commissions, which sat behind closed doors. The chairmen of these commissions were not elected, but appointed in advance.

No draft resolutions were submitted to the congress by these commissions. At a plenary sitting the report on the work of the commission for education and vocational training of young people (it was called the "equalisation of opportunity" commission) was delivered by its chairwoman. This verbal report was approved as a party directive in the sphere of education.

Of the 113 members of the Executive only 20 were elected. Half of them are members of parliament. The UDR parliamentary group has the right to elect 25 members of the Executive, and senators elect five representatives to the Executive. In addition, under the rules, the Executive includes the Chairman of the National Assembly, the Vice-Chairman of the Senate, the chairmen of the two UDR groups in the National Assembly and the Senate, and the Prime Minister, who is the nominal head of the UDR.

The UDR congress was thus denied the possibility of electing the Executive and exercising any practical influence on the party's policies. The congress was a routine propaganda undertaking designed to popularise the party's leading personalities.

At a plenary meeting of the Central Committee of the French Communist Party on March 20, 1974, it was noted: "In the parties of the bourgeoisie, in a totalitarian party like the UDR, leaders are recruited from a small privileged group and from zealous servitors of big capital and its policies. They coopt those who are known to be most apt to prolong the outworn regime and the championing of whose interests cannot be publicised."*

* *L'Humanité*, March 23, 1974.

This party's inner workings are not an exception but the standard for bourgeois parties, whose democracy is the direct continuation of all the features of bourgeois democracy with its hypocrisy, formal rights and actual denial of rights. This is convincingly seen in any bourgeois party. Take, for example, the Radical Socialists, one of the oldest parties in France. At its congress in November 1973 it was stated that the party had 48,000 members. This figure caused general astonishment. Various estimates placed its membership at between 3,500 and 10,000. The character of its work is such that the reality of its composition and activity of its members are of no importance whatever. At the congress the party chairman was reproached with adopting decisions in the name of the party, in many cases without even notifying the Executive or the Bureau.

The party's sole aim is to have representatives in parliament. On this basis groups are frequently formed in the party and combinations of different candidatures are created. The contradictions among the Radical Socialists deepened when the Left Radicals withdrew from the party. With little to distinguish its views from those of the UDR, this party still tries, in its drive for votes, to give the impression that it is a sort of "third force". Its internal life mirrors the entire range of manipulations inherent in bourgeois democracy.

This is true of any bourgeois party of any country. In Italy the Christian Democratic Party constantly makes the charge that the structure and inner life of the Communist Party are undemocratic. But a comparison of the facts shows not only the speciousness of this charge but that it serves the bourgeoisie as a cover for the totalitarianism of its own parties. The reactionary forces, it will be recalled, secured the passage of a decision to hold a referendum on the question of divorce in order to divert public opinion from crucial issues of the country's development. Using the example of how the Communists

worked out their attitude to the referendum, Enrico Berlinguer showed the false democracy of the CDP and how important problems were decided in the Communist Party. At a conference of Communist workers he said: "For three years now we have been considering the question of the referendum in the Political Bureau, in the leadership and in the Central Committee. We have drawn comrades from the federations and sections and all our activists into the discussion. Unlike us, the Christian Democratic Party passed such an important decision almost suddenly, by a statement solely of its Secretary. Not a single leading organ was convened: neither the National Council, nor even the leadership; no consultations with party members were organised."*

There are some points of distinction in the inner workings of the Social-Democratic parties. They usually maintain the decorum of electivity, a "battle of opinions", but, essentially speaking, no interest whatever is shown in the views of the rank and file, and if there is any opposition to the leadership it is callously suppressed.

The Social-Democratic Party of West Berlin is quite typical in this respect. In September 1973 its leadership mailed a circular to all members calling upon them to take an active part in the coming party elections. The fact that the post office is used as a means of contact between the leadership and the rank and file unambiguously shows that the latter are regarded mainly as electors. They are informed by mail of the existence in the party of "groups" desiring to set up a "party within the party". Less than 17,000 of the total membership of nearly 50,000 took part in the SDP elections in 1973, but this did not prevent the party chairman Klaus Schütz from announcing that these elections were marked by what for the SDP was an unprecedented mobilisation of the entire membership.

While proclaiming their adherence to "democratic

* *L'Unità*, February 11, 1974.

socialism" and underscoring the popular character of the party and the unacceptability of a class approach to democracy, the SDP leadership nevertheless feel it is quite democratic to expel from the party those who advocate anything even resembling cooperation between Social-Democrats and Communists. Any statement in favour of permitting opponents of the "free democratic system", i.e., Communists, to take jobs in government agencies is considered sufficient grounds for expulsion from a party claiming to be a champion of democracy.

Democratic verbiage and practices that are far removed from democracy emphasise, as it were, that the party leadership are well versed in the mechanism of bourgeois democracy, which they carry over in its entirety to relations within the party.

The practices in political parties in the FRG, including the Social-Democratic Party, are described by Ulrich Lohmar, an SDP ideologist, in a book entitled *Inner-Party Democracy (Innerparteiliche Demokratie)*, Stuttgart, 1963). He writes that there can be no question of "any perceptible activity by the rank and file of the federal parties, of inner-party expression of will and of influence by the rank and file on party policy". The rank and file do not decide the question of the party programme and its policies, "their influence on the composition of the social and inner-party leading groups remaining confined to the communal sphere".*

The 22nd Congress of the Socialist Party of Austria (1974) likewise demonstrated that verbal recognition of democracy in that party was only formal. The resolution approving the government's policy was not even discussed. The problem of "inner-party reform" worrying delegates at the congress was turned over to a commission. The re-

* *Protokoll des Essener Parteitag der Deutschen Kommunistischen Partei DKP. 12. und 13. April 1969, Essen, Hamburg, 1969, p. 59.*

port made by Heinz Brantl, head of the party's propaganda agency, in connection with the statement that among the SPA's rank and file there was "obvious discontent, which among many of them had grown into total apathy" contained the following admission regarding the rank and file: "Membership dues (we hope) are received regularly from them, from time to time they are invited to take part in undertakings, they are rarely informed and, properly speaking, are never asked about anything."*

The bourgeois and reformist parties rigidly keep to the customary bounds of the society in which they function and try to persuade everybody that the democracy of that society is mankind's greatest achievement. If they had had the ability to assess their world outlook critically, they would have had full grounds for repeating the words of a literary personage: "We are like hens in a coop who believe that this is all there is to the world."**

Yet, while denying everything existing outside its coop, capitalism is anxious not so much to extol itself as to defame the ideas brought by the system replacing it. The revisionist attacks on the Leninist principles of democracy, including inner-Party democracy, follow the same direction.

3. LACK OF PRINCIPLES TURNED INTO A PRINCIPLE

Who uttered the words: "Any vanguard that gives itself the right to protect and represent the masses is really ... a bureaucratic vanguard"?*** Anybody familiar with the anarchist assertions that organisation of any kind spells out bureaucracy, will at once say that this is an anarchist

* *Weg und Ziel*, April 1974, p. 137.

** Simone de Beauvoir, *Les belles images*, Paris, 1966, p. 32.

*** *Red Flag*, April 10, 1970.

pronouncement. But he will be mistaken. In this case it is a quotation from a Trotskyist newspaper published by supporters of G. Posadas.

Who said that renunciation of factions leads to a party's degeneration, that Lenin was never opposed to factions and groups in the Party? This smacks very much of the Social-Democratic idea about democracy as freedom for a struggle between factions and trends in the Party. But these words, too, do not belong to a Social-Democrat or a Right revisionist. They were pronounced by the same Posadas.

Extremes of this kind had always been typical of Trotsky. Trotsky's stand on the question of the Party changed in accordance with his political aims. At the outset of his political career Trotsky was a vigorous proponent of cohabitation in the Party of the most diverse opportunist schools. Soon after the October Revolution, Trotsky, who had at one time accused Lenin of attempting to establish an iron-clad dictatorship in the Party, demanded making military discipline a principle of Party construction and insisted on administration by injunction, on "tightening screws".

His lack of principles was sharply condemned by Lenin, who wrote: "It is impossible to argue with Trotsky on the merits of the issue, because Trotsky holds no views whatever."^{*} Time and again Lenin called attention to the fact that "one day Trotsky plagiarises from the ideological stock-in-trade of one faction; the next day he plagiarises from that of another"^{**}; that he "has never had any 'physiognomy' at all; the only thing he does have is a habit of changing sides, of skipping from the liberals to the Marxists and back again"^{***}.

It is said that a poor idea is better than no idea at all. Trotsky easily changed his views about the Party, and all

^{*} V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 17, p. 362.

^{**} Ibid., Vol. 16, p. 391.

^{***} Ibid., Vol. 20, p. 160.

these views were prejudicial to the working class. The reason for this was that all were borrowed from different sources, usually from sources alien to proletarian ideology.

In some cases the source was Social-Democratic opportunism in its most consummate form. Lenin wrote that what appealed to Trotsky was "only the *European* models of opportunism, but certainly not the models of European partisanship".^{*} In other cases, petty-bourgeois non-acceptance of proletarian, revolutionary discipline drew Trotsky close to ideas that were almost anarchistic. Then, to use Lenin's words, Trotsky played a game of "powers", of "trends", demanding a "special status" for himself and his few supporters.^{**} When he found himself in the minority he spoke against the "imposition of the will" of the majority and charged that it was intended to "fasten the noose of discipline" around the Party. There were cases when Trotsky slid into Blanquist conspiratorial ideas about the Party and advocated instituting military discipline in its ranks. "You know," he said, affecting a pose, "that I have never been a 'democrat' ... and I do not seek to take out a patent for democracy."

In all of Trotsky's rushings he was consistent in one thing, namely, his animosity towards Lenin's views about the Party, about its organisational, political and ideological principles.

Léo Figuères, member of the Central Committee of the French Communist Party, writes about Trotsky's lack of principles in the book *Trotskyism Is Anti-Leninism*. He recalls how Trotsky behaved when he was in charge of the French department in the Comintern. In his letters to

^{*} V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 20, p. 341.

^{**} As was aptly put by G. E. Rudzutak, Trotsky was either in a state of war with the Central Committee and the Party or in a state of armistice—both during and after Lenin's lifetime. (P. A. Rodionov, *Collectivism, the Highest Principle of Party Leadership*, Moscow, 1974, p. 158, in Russian).

people in France Trotsky was initially categorically against the formation of factions in the Party and upheld the principles of democratic centralism. But he soon forgot his own counsels and concentrated on setting up a Trotskyist faction in the French Communist Party as well.* Trotsky wanted factions because they suited him. In some other situation he could "chart" a different programme.

Trotsky's lack of principles was inherited by his successors.

"A student can change a party like a shirt, without serious consequences to his studies and to his activities,"** preaches Alain Krivine, a leader of the "united secretariat" of the "Fourth International" in Paris. The Trotskyists themselves change their "principles" in questions related to the Party faster than they change their shirts.

The range of the Trotskyist "ideas" about the Party is very wide indeed. They include scraps from Right-opportunist, social-reformist and even typically bourgeois conceptions. Among the Trotskyists there are many adherents also of anarchist laxity. But Blanquist, conspiratorial ideas are more to the liking of many of them.

In the course of three decades the Trotskyists have been engaged in a policy of penetrating workers' organisations, a policy they call "entrism". In Britain, France and some other countries they joined social-reformist parties with the aim of recruiting adherents. But in order to remain in these parties they did not risk criticising their leaders. "Entrism", conceived as a means of disintegrating the Social-Democratic parties, boomeranged against its inspirers, inducing them to flirt with social-reformism. As was noted by Günther Weiss, a West German Marxist,

* Léo Figuères, *Le trotskisme, cet antiléonisme*, Paris, 1969, p. 185.

** *Struggle of the Communists Against the Ideology of Trotskyism*, Moscow, 1973, p. 99 (in Russian).

Trotskyist "ideology" easily harmonises with the specific Social-Democratic brand of anti-communism. It is not surprising that disappointment in Trotskyism induces many people to join the Social-Democrats. A noteworthy point is that Trotskyism is entirely uncritical of the organisational principles of the Social-Democratic parties. More, it is clearly impressed by these principles.

What have the Trotskyists borrowed from the Social-Democrats in questions of organisation? Internal looseness, no particular requirements for admission to membership (the motto being: more members at any cost), and vagueness in questions of programme (most of the Trotskyist groups have no programme of their own). On account of the constant fluidity of members, these groups are open to infiltration by police agents: the admission rules are not strict and the conditions are extremely favourable for political, particularly anti-communist, provocations.

Some Trotskyists contend that the "purpose of the Party is not to govern but to educate"* and regard their "parties" as purely educational organisations; others shape their "parties" on Blanquist lines, and preach the conception of an "active minority" on the anarchist model. Léo Figuères writes that they set up organisations "of a paramilitary kind and endeavour to spread their views by violence... making no allowance for a discussion of the substance of their policy and slogans. It would be hard to find a more undemocratic idea of organisation than the Trotskyist."**

The Latin American Trotskyist organisations go so far as to recommend that their members should not have children so as not to be distracted from the political

* *Ce que veut la Ligue communiste. Section française de la 4^e internationale. Manifeste du Comité Central des 29 et 30 janvier 1972*, Paris, 1972, p. 46.

** *Struggle of the Communists Against the Ideology of Trotskyism*, p. 80 (in Russian).

struggle. These groups are bellicosely irreconcilable towards anyone harbouring any doubts whatever about the justification and correctness of adopted decisions. Hence the unceasing persecution of differently minded people and the expulsion of "apostates". In some cases this intolerance erupts into physical maltreatment in the direct sense of the word. The following was written by a Leftist group about the Trotskyists vying with it: "They beat up those who refuse to submit to them and also those who distribute the leaflets of other groups."*

The Trotskyists' contempt for democratic principles in the life and work of their groups leads to the exaltation of individuals, of "leaders" (it is not accidental that they call themselves by the names of their leaders: Posadists, Francoists, Pabloites, Lamberites, Krivinites, and so on). But this does not prevent all of them from uniting in their attacks on the Leninist norms of partisanship. With eager unanimity G. Posadas, the advocate of ultra-revolutionism, E. Mandel, the ideologist of Trotskyist social-reformism, and the Trotskyist "centrist" (there is such a school in the present "Fourth International") Michael Pablo "denounce" the absence of factions and opposition in the Communist parties. "Freedom of factions" is one of the few enduring "principles" of modern Trotskyism in questions related to the Party. The Trotskyist fulminations against the subordination of the minority to the majority, against Party discipline impress the anarchists. The Trotskyists do not notice that they thereby demonstrate their ideological poverty and the anarchist origin of some of their views about the Party. While borrowing many propositions from the Social-Democrats, they slanderously call the Communists the "new social-reformists" and "more Social-Democratic than those who officially call themselves Social-Democrats".

* *Die Partei Aufbauen, Plattformen, Grundsatzserklärungen*, p. 89.

But abuse means little in politics; in any case it cannot replace clarity of thought or an integral conception. The more arguments the Trotskyists borrow now from the anarchists and now from the Social-Democrats, the clearer it becomes that in questions concerning the Party they have not moved an inch from their opportunist "marking time" of 70 years ago.

In their hatred of the Communists the Trotskyists have gone so far that many of them dash from the assertion that it is generally possible "to do without a party" to the assertion that a "new vanguard" has appeared consisting of diverse Leftist, including Trotskyist, groups.

In his day Trotsky flirted with Martov, Axelrod and other leading opportunists. His present successors have continued this line of cooperation with Right opportunism. They do not conceal their admiration of Roger Garaudy. In his fight against the Party of Lenin, Trotsky entered into the most unprincipled alliances. His successors accept anybody as allies in order somehow to weaken the influence of Lenin's teaching and of those who work to translate that teaching into reality.

4. DEMOCRACY IN ORGANISATION AND DEED

Democracy in the inner life of a Party is usually assessed by the rights it accords its members and the actual possibilities for enjoying these rights.

The Marxist-Leninist parties functioning legally give their members broad rights. The Rules of the French Communist Party grants members the right, among others, to express their views freely in Party organs on all Party issues; to vote in the adoption of the decisions of their local Party organisations; to elect or be elected to leading organs; to state in Party organs what they believe to be well-considered criticism of any member or organisation

of the Party; to be informed of any reproofs or criticism against them.*

Approximately identical rights are recorded in the Rules of the Italian Communist Party: the right "to help work out the political guideline and decisions of his organisation, and also of the Party as a whole, by participating in the debates at meetings, utilising his vote and joining in open discussions in the Party press"; "to criticise in Party instances any functionary and any Party organisation for shortcomings, errors, cases of unseemly behaviour, and report the most serious cases to higher organs". The Rules accord every Party member the right "to conduct free research in philosophy, science, art and culture".**

In no party are members given such broad possibilities in inner-party life as in the Communist parties. In other parties everything is usually reduced to general civic rights, which continue to operate, as it were, in inner-party life. For instance, the Rules of the Social-Democratic Party of Germany only envisage the rights stated in Paragraph 5. "Under the Rules every Party member has the right and duty to take part in moulding political opinion, in elections and in voting, to support the aims of the Social-Democratic Party."***

This jumbling in one paragraph of some general phrases about rights and duties creates the conditions for actually denying rights to party members and, essentially, for not requiring them to carry out any duties.

A specific of democracy in Communist parties is that it is defined not only by the rights but also by the concrete

* 20e Congrès du Parti Communiste Français, Saint-Ouen, 13-17 Decembre 1972. *Rapports, Interventions et Documents, Salutations et Messages*, Paris, 1973, p. 449.

** XIII Congresso del Partito comunista italiano. *Atti e risoluzioni*, pp. 517-18.

*** *Jahrbuch der Sozialdemokratischen Partei Deutschlands 1968/1969*, Hannover-Bonn, p. 485.

duties of members. The classical Leninist requirement that every Communist should work in a Party organisation is a key feature distinguishing the Party of the new type. Permeated with a profound democratic content, this requirement is based on the fact that a Communist is not a detached onlooker in the Party, but an active participant in its life, that the work of the Party consists of the efforts of all its members.

Lenin's postulate on the significance of day-to-day revolutionary work by every Party member is the core of the inner-Party democracy of the communist movement. This is a democracy under which every Communist actively contributes to the work of the Party not only through elected representatives but by direct personal participation.

The significance and content of socialist democracy, which all Communist parties uphold, lies in the participation of ever larger numbers of people in the administration of the state, of social affairs.* This is not mere wishful thinking. It is historical reality embodied in the countries of the socialist community. The Communist parties want their inner life to be governed by a democracy under which every Communist is active in all Party affairs.

If democracy ranges beyond the framework of solely election rights and becomes a democracy of action, of deeds, it requires day-to-day direction and the combined, collective efforts of all for the attainment of the common aim. This makes Party democracy inseverable from Party leadership, from the need for centralised direction. With the development of democracy, in other words, with the fuller manifestation of activity by the Communists, increasing demands are made of the centralised leadership and growing significance is acquired by discipline, the subordination of the minority to the majority and other indispensable aspects of true organisation.

The unity between democratic inner-Party life and the high level of its organisation finds consummate expression

* 24th Congress of the CPSU, p. 99.

in the principle of democratic centralism. This is not an artificial, speculative unity. It springs from life itself, from the requirements of life. It is mobile and flexible because life does not stand still. Precisely because the principle of democratic centralism is the most concentrated expression of the specifics of the new type of Party it is constantly attacked by the anarchists and Right revisionists, who reject discipline and organisation, and by sectarian, bureaucratic elements prepared to reduce democracy to a formality and believing that the Party leadership can by itself resolve all the problems of Party construction and the political struggle.

Every possible means is used in the attacks on democratic centralism. Roger Garaudy, who styles himself a "professional fighter against dogmatism", has recourse to methods which the most diehard dogmatist would not venture to use. Seventy years after the publication of Lenin's *What Is to Be Done?* Garaudy makes the discovery that in this work, which is regarded, to use his words, as the "bible of democratic centralism", this term is not to be found anywhere. Then, after making a number of excursions into the history of Bolshevism and avoiding any reference to democratic centralism, Garaudy plainly wants to create the impression that this sacramental conception appeared after Lenin's lifetime.*

How depleted the barrel of revisionist arguments must have become if they have to resort to such cheap apologetics. In the index to the *Collected Works* of Lenin the conception "democratic centralism" is mentioned 26 times. In *What Is to Be Done?* Lenin does not use the term "democratic centralism" for the simple reason that Garaudy's predecessors, the opponents of a centralised Marxist Party in Russia, had hit upon what Garaudy now gives out for the latest creative thinking. Like the revisionists today, they drew a dividing line between centralism

* Roger Garaudy, *L'alternative*, Paris, 1972, p. 226.

and democracy. Lenin showed that when a numerically small Party was only beginning to form underground, democracy could be demanded only by demagogues, who, for the sake of a formal principle, were prepared to go so far as to give the Party away.

In *What Is to Be Done?* Lenin noted the key elements of Party democracy: accountability, publicity, electivity, and open political activity enabling everybody to see the attitude of each Party member. Three years later, when the revolution of 1905 only slightly lifted the curtain on the possibility for promoting Party democracy, Lenin called for a bold combination of centralism and democracy. In *What Is to Be Done?* he wrote that for a small Party there was something even more precious than democracy, namely, the sense of comradeship among like-minded people, a comradeship that created a genuinely democratic atmosphere in an embattled organisation. One can only regret that Garaudy, if one can indeed believe him, did not find the idea of democratic centralism in *What Is to Be Done?*.

As many other denigrators of democratic centralism, Garaudy is prepared to recognise it as having been valid in the past but on no account at present. He declares that democratic centralism was conceived "according to a mechanical model" and that it was time to conceive it "according to the cybernetic model". Whenever anybody states an opinion it must be discussed in the Party organisations.* Garaudy does not specify how he conceives this continuing plebiscite on every issue. He orients himself on computers that can quickly compute "general" opinion. Here the role of the leadership is reduced to carrying out the dictates of this "general" will. This is entirely in the spirit of the hero of a French comedy, who said: "I am their leader, and for that reason I must follow them."

* *World Marxist Review*, June 1970, p. 13.

The Communists steadfastly uphold the principle of democratic centralism as an indispensable condition for the preservation of the Party's inherent fundamental type, namely, its Marxist-Leninist make-up. They are paying more and more attention to the fact that the struggle for democratic centralism should not be confined to ideology and the protection of the purity of principles but that it should be embodied in day-to-day practice and lead to the steady improvement of the methods of Party leadership and to a fuller unfolding of inner-Party democracy, if this is not hindered by objective circumstances.

Since the days when Lenin underscored that active day-to-day work by every Party member was crucial to the activities of the Communist parties, the communist movement has made considerable headway. To this day, of course, not all members of the Communist parties are active, but the internal life of these parties is organised in such a way as to encourage activity by Communists, to stimulate their initiative and organisation.

With the exception of the Communist parties, no parties had primary organisations at factories. For many Communist parties, despite the proscription imposed by entrepreneurs, these primary organisations became centres of political work among the mass of the workers. In their turn, these active links of the Party organism, which firmly implement the Party line, influence the shaping of the Party's general policy. Some Socialist parties are today endeavouring to set up their organisations at factories, not without the aim of weakening communist influence. The Communist parties want each primary organisation to operate actively, constantly make its presence felt at the factories, put forward demands in keeping with the interests of the workers, publish its own newspaper and display greater resourcefulness in all areas and more initiative in regard to the forms of struggle. The French Communists consider that their Party has more possibilities of being heard at the factories,

where the basic contradiction of capitalist society—the antagonism between labour and capital—is constantly in the forefront.

But capitalist exploitation does not end at the factory gates. It affects all aspects of the life of working people, and the primary organisations, naturally, carry on their work in the residential districts, organising the struggle of the different strata of working people and striving to unite individual groups of the population by interests—tenants, parents of schoolchildren and students, and so on—giving the struggle for the satisfaction of even limited demands a socio-political character.

The role played by the primary organisations of every Communist Party is evidence of the profound democracy prevailing in the revolutionary vanguard of the working class. The Party acts not as a sum of individual members and organisations but as an integral organism in which all the links are interrelated. Democratic centralism gives wide scope for fruitful discussion in the Party, for the collective charting of its policies, for independent initiative by all its organisations and for the promotion of Party criticism. "The principle of democratic centralism and autonomy for local Party organisations," Lenin wrote, "implies universal and full *freedom to criticise*, so long as this does not disturb the *unity of a definite action*; it rules out *all* criticism which disrupts or makes difficult the *unity* of an action decided on by the Party."^{*}

In June 1974, the journal *France Nouvelle*, which frequently organises discussions in its pages, inviting contributions not only from Communists but also from representatives of other parties, carried a reportage under the heading "Three Journalists Interview Three Leaders of the Communist Party's Federations". One of the journalists asked: "In all parties there are opposition groups, nuances, people who have lost hope or are displeased that

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 10, p. 443.

their views are not accepted, a stratification of generations, worrying questions and so on. You are materialists and you do not believe in alchemy. How do you achieve the miracle of complete accord after the leadership delivers a report and it is discussed?" Henri Fiszbin (of the Paris Federation of the FCP) replied that this impression did not conform to reality. Under collective leadership far from everything was recognised as of equal worth and acceptable, but this did not signify that each special opinion crystallised into disagreement with the Central Committee and became a problem that might be formulated as follows: Either agree with what I say or I refuse to accept the attitude of the majority.

In this interview it was convincingly shown how collective opinion was formed in the Party, how different viewpoints were taken into consideration, how each suggestion received close attention and how a political guideline was worked out collectively. This specific of Party democracy is to be observed in all Communist parties, at all levels, from primary organisations to the Central Committee. The Communist parties attach immense importance to broad and uninterrupted inner-Party information—from top to bottom and from bottom to top.

The character of inner-Party democracy is eloquently demonstrated in the preparations for congresses, and in the drawing up of documents concerning the entire Party. Even those Communist parties that function semi-legally or are compelled to operate underground make every effort to ensure the broadest discussion of materials for their congresses. In 1969, when its 13th Congress was convened, the Communist Party of Argentina had the possibility of functioning only semi-legally. Nevertheless, commissions were set up to draw up the documents many months before the congress was held. Some 500 people took part in the work of these commissions. On the basis of the recommendations of the commissions, the Central Committee drafted the political theses, which were

published in 47,000 copies and distributed to the different organisations. They were discussed in primary organisations and at district and provincial conferences. Nine hundred people attended 21 provincial conferences. The Party Congress was addressed by 83 of the 116 delegates.* The preparations for the 14th Congress in 1973 were conducted on a larger scale; this was possible because the Party was then functioning legally and there was an upsurge of the popular struggle.

The breadth of inner-Party democracy depends entirely on the conditions in which the given Party functions. For instance, in the FRG, where certain rights were ensured for the Communist Party through the efforts of the democratic forces, the draft Programme Statement of the German Communist Party was discussed at open meetings and at innumerable talks held by the Communists with Social-Democrats, trade unionists, workers, office employees, students and intellectuals. More than a thousand proposals were made for amendments and additions from Party organisations, and hundreds of comments were received from individual Communists and people not belonging to the Communist Party. At the Essen Congress it was stressed that the "discussion of the draft is evidence of the efficacy of inner-Party democracy, which cannot be found in any of the parties operating in the Federal Republic".**

"The Democratic Method of FCP Congresses" is the heading of a long interview given by Georges Cogniot, a leading personality in the French Communist Party, who delivered reports at the political commissions on the draft theses of three congresses of the FCP. He spoke of the breadth of the discussion of the Central Committee's draft theses at meetings of primary organisations, and at section and federation conferences. He cited instances of how

* *Political Affairs*, May 1969, pp. 29-33.

** *Protokoll des Essener Parteitages der Deutschen Kommunistischen Partei DKP*, 12. und 13. April 1969, Essen, p. 50.

amendments specified key propositions in that document and enriched them theoretically. The adoption or rejection of amendments was motivated, and this, on the one hand, was important political training for Party members and, on the other, helped to draw up a document containing clearly worded formulations and, consequently, allowing for a better organisation of political work. In conclusion it was asked: "After a political line is discussed, approved and adopted, how is it translated into practice?" Georges Cogniot replied: "This question touches on democratic centralism, which is a basic principle for the Party. As I have just shown, communist policy has been worked out by the entire Party. It expresses the thoughts and collective will of the entire Party. It cannot be fragmented and individual propositions cannot be made non-obligatory.... After the Party has analysed and discussed the historical situation and the Communists have stated their views, the theses that are adopted and reflect this discussion become a law for the entire Party...."

"The Communists aim to unite all workers and other democratic forces for the hard battle against the tyranny of the monopolies, and they are creating an organisation that is centralised and not atomised, anarchic and unstable. But, at the same time, its work must rely on the activity, initiative and responsibility of all its members.

"Objectively, the Communist Party can fulfil its mission provided its structure satisfies the requirements both of democracy and centralism."*

Georges Cogniot spoke in detail of how the principle of democratic centralism was applied on the basis of the experience of past decades. The FCP had considerably more experience and its organisation and strength as the revolutionary Party of the working class were steadily growing; also, it was increasingly promoting the collective,

* *Cahiers d'histoire de l'Institut Maurice Thorez* No. 1, November-December 1972, pp. 129-30.

democratic character of the work of all its organs and strove to assert its authority as the authority of a great democratic Party. As was stated by its General Secretary Georges Marchais, the Party considers that "democratic centralism is the highest form of democracy".*

The Communists hold that democracy in the Party is determined not only by the character of its organisation, of its inner life, but also by the extent of the information it gives about itself to the working class, to all working people. Of course, the Communist parties that are persecuted are compelled to work in secret, but where the Communists are able to operate openly they make no secret of what can be made public. The French Communists are proud that they are justified in calling their Party a "Party with an open heart".

The most far-fetched tales are circulated by the bourgeois parties. It is alleged that the Communist parties have a huge apparatus and secret sources of funds. A demagogic campaign was started in Italy when a scandal was precipitated by the publicity given to the fact that an oil company had bribed political parties to secure legislation favourable to it. In this campaign all parties without exception and the system of parties as such were maligned.

Like the Communist parties of other countries, the Italian Communist Party has never been involved in any political scandal. It gave a rebuff to this undemocratic campaign. The Communists demanded that all parties, as they had been doing themselves for many years, should inform the public of the source of their finances.

Interviewed on March 5, 1974 by the newspaper *Paese sera*, Armando Cossutta, member of the Political Bureau of the Italian Communist Party, said that "each person has the friends he deserves.... We address ourselves to the working people because we are the Party of the working people. Others address themselves to the

* *France Nouvelle*, April 9-15, 1974, p. 11.

Confederation of Industrialists or to the oil magnates. This is not what makes us indignant; our indignation is aroused by the fact that all this is concealed and kept in secret. Moreover, it is tolerated that state funds are used for parties, that corruption is spreading and poisoning much of the country's political life and the inner life of many parties. This is what must be stopped."

The Italian Communist Party is the only party in Italy that annually publishes its budget.

The principle of democratic centralism, which ensures unity between broad democracy and the Party's militant cohesion, redoubles the strength not only of the Communist parties that have become mass organisations but also of those Communist parties, which, by virtue of various circumstances, are still not so large, i.e., of the Communist parties functioning legally and of those that are compelled to go underground.

The Portuguese Communist Party operated in the face of the most formidable difficulties for more than 45 years. But when fascism was overthrown it emerged from underground and demonstrated that it was the most organised political force in that country. This has been noted even by those organs of the bourgeois press that have never printed a kind word about the Communists. On September 22, 1972, long before the anti-fascist revolution, Alvaro Cunhal, General Secretary of the Portuguese Communist Party, told *Rinascita*, journal of the Italian Communists, that the PCP was playing the paramount role in the struggle against the fascists, that "it is the undisputed vanguard of that struggle, its great inspirer in all the sectors in which it is unfolding. . . . It is the only national revolutionary Party that has an organisation steeled by long years underground and innumerable tested and experienced cadres".

Subsequent developments bore out the accuracy of this characteristic of the Portuguese Communist Party's organisation.

The history of the international communist movement offers many instances to show that the correct application of the principle of democratic centralism is the main source of a Communist Party's strength, while deviations from this principle and its Right-opportunist or Leftist distortions weaken the Party and harbour the threat of crippling it as a militant revolutionary force.

Democratic centralism is the organisational expression of the Party's proletarian character as the Party of the class most consistently championing democracy and capable of organised action on any scale, national and international. This is why the ideological struggle over the question of democratic centralism is indivisibly linked with the more general problem of the make-up of the Communist Party, of its organisation and unity, and of the role it is capable of playing in the revolutionary struggle.

The Communists do not beguile themselves with illusions. They know that as long as capitalism exists in the world there will be the social soil for bourgeois and petty-bourgeois individualism and for reformist accommodation, that attempts will continue to be made to discredit revolutionary organisational principles.

Capitalism easily reconciles itself to the existence of many groups that claim they are the "most revolutionary" but which have neither discipline nor a durable organisation. But it will never reconcile itself to the existence of an organised, disciplined political proletarian-based Party that influences the masses, employs tactics in keeping with the conditions obtaining in the given country and never loses sight of the fact that socialism is its goal.

While maintaining the purity of their organisational weapon and adopting an implacable attitude to any attempts at undermining the principle of democratic centralism, the Communist parties pursue the objective of being able to lead the masses in any situation and under all circumstances. The Party exists not for itself. It exists to serve the people.

CAN THE VANGUARD BE A MASS ORGANISATION?

In the Communist parties there have frequently been discussions over what organisation would best contribute to the success of the revolutionary struggle—a Party of cadres or a mass Party.

For instance, in 1920 the “Left” Communists in Germany wanted a “Party of leaders” (an organisation of professional revolutionaries) and, alongside it, a mass Party.*

In the 1950s this problem was debated by the Italian Communists. Reporting to a plenary sitting of the ICP Central Control Commission in September 1957, Mauro Scoccimarro, the commission’s chairman, spoke of the ill-considered attitude of those who drew a dividing line between a Party of cadres and a Party of the masses: “This is a misguided formulation of the issue: the Party must be both a mass and a cadre Party.”** The Italian Communist Party had to expend no little effort to make this fundamental question of Party construction clearly understood. At the 13th Congress of the ICP in 1972

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 31, p. 40.

** Mauro Scoccimarro, *Il Rafforzamento del Partito. Rapporto alla CCC del 20 settembre 1957*, Rome, 1957, p. 36.

Enrico Berlinguer stressed that the ICP was developing as “a Party of cadres and the masses”.*

In the early 1960s, at its 18th Congress the Communist Party of Uruguay rejected the proposition that there should be either a mass or a cadre Party and set itself the objective of being a mass Party with a numerous and well-trained cadre.**

The very emergence of this problem in various Communist parties was, as a rule, linked with a certain phase of their development and mirrored the new objective possibilities that were opening up for them after they had formed and strengthened their nucleus. When the first Party of the new type was formed this was one of the problems over which a sharp ideological struggle unfolded.

1. PARTY CADRES

The “leaders-party-class-masses” problem, to which Lenin devoted considerable attention in “*Left-Wing Communism—an Infantile Disorder*,” evolved into a fundamental issue for the first time at the Second Congress of the RSDLP. It is still acute in the revolutionary movement.

The teeth-gnashing of the opportunists, who declared they wanted a Party that would have “only generals without an army,” was opposed by Lenin with a lucid conception of professional revolutionaries as the cementing foundation of the Party, as the core ensuring successiveness and continuity in the Party’s activities, theoretical substantiation of its policies and skilled implementation of its tactics. “It should not be imagined,” Lenin said at the congress, “that Party organisations must consist solely

* XIII Congresso del Partito comunista italiano. *Atti e risoluzioni*, p. 65.

** *World Marxist Review*, February 1961, p. 14.

of professional revolutionaries.”* But if the Party wanted the largest possible number of the most diverse forces from the different strata of the proletariat and other classes to participate in the movement, the “leadership of the movement should be entrusted to the smallest possible number of the most homogeneous possible groups of professional revolutionaries with great practical experience.”** This important proposition, formulated by Lenin before the congress in his “Letter to a Comrade on Our Organisational Tasks” in September 1902, was in keeping with the obtaining historical conditions, and Lenin consistently translated it into practice.

The Western Social-Democratic parties likewise had professional political leaders. Though professionals, they were no longer revolutionaries and the sphere of their activity increasingly became election campaigns, parliamentary combinations and insignificant reforms put into effect after much haggling. The Millerand affair, which cut the social-democratic movement of all countries to the quick as an open betrayal of revolutionary duty and the degeneration of a Socialist into a hostage of the bourgeois government, subsequently became the standard behaviour of reformist leaders. The opportunist parties breed opportunist professionals who meet their requirements, officials, many of whom hardly differ from conventional bourgeois liberal politicians. Today nobody is surprised that in many countries the Right-wing Social-Democratic politicians ultimately become members of the boards of corporations and other monopoly associations.

Pseudo-revolutionary views about the Party and the character of the class struggle are mirrored in the ideas of most of the Leftist groups about the designation and make-up of the professional revolutionary. For them the working people are the object that must be “shaken into

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 6, p. 498.

** Ibid., p. 246.

life”, a grey and faceless mass that is useless until it is “stirred” and “led”. But only “strong personalities” are able to “stir” and “lead” the masses. As seen by the anarchists and the Maoists, these are “heroes” and “initiative groups” that stand above the masses.

Lacking faith in the masses, the Leftists form themselves into castes. Some groups justify this with the argument that it is required by the methods of struggle employed by them. A member of the Angry Brigade, a group of anarchist terrorists operating in Britain, declared: “The very nature of the act of bombing can’t permit a lot of people to know.”*

Others contend that small groups have the advantage over large political organisations that everybody can “know each other in the face”, that large organisations lead to the “loss of individuality”, and so forth.

During the closing years of the 1960s and in the early 1970s there was an incalculable host of leaders of vociferous and sterile groups and tiny bands who laid claim to the role of professional revolutionaries. The progressive Japanese author Kenzaburo Oë keenly noted the anti-revolutionary qualities of a “hero” as imagined by such claimants. In his novel *The Benighted Youth*, one of the personages heading a Trotskyist organisation says: “I must become a professional revolutionary. It is my belief that without conquering the temptations so abundant in the world, without prevailing over transient aspirations it is impossible to become an active force of any movement. Everything must be renounced. This world and these people must be hated. Then, I think, it would be possible to live the real life, as I understand it, of a revolutionary.... Sense of friendship, solidarity—all that is shit.”**

These “revolutionaries” form sects that are unable and

* *Morning Star*, October 25, 1972.

** Kenzaburo Oë, *The Benighted Youth*, Moscow, 1973, pp. 206-07 (Russian translation).

have no desire to establish links with the masses, and in these groups they push out their rivals in order to hasten the attainment of their ambitions. This atmosphere gives birth to careerists, to political "kings for a day", who eagerly stimulate the cult of their own personality. Having lost all hope of playing any role for any length of time, the small groups are prepared to follow any "leader", and "strong man", who, possibly, would appear in their own ranks and extricate them from their deep isolation. The "Extreme Lefts" in the FRG write that "non-revisionists", as they style themselves, will win their own political future only if there appears "the figure of a leader possessing the sublime gift of influencing people. Otherwise, because of splits, there remains for them only the road to the German Communist Party or the Left wing of the Social-Democratic Party".*

People who do not conceal their willingness to become "leaders" constantly appear among the ultra-Lefts. The bourgeois press eagerly gives publicity to such "professional revolutionaries". For instance, the press of the capitalist countries hailed Cohn-Bendit as a "new Robin Hood", as a "born leader", as a "man of action". Much was said and written in the same spirit about Geismar, boss of the French Maoists.

But all these parodies of revolutionaries, who disappear as quickly as they appear, are further testimony that true revolutionaries come not from sectarian hothouses but from the field of the class battle waged by the working masses.

Lenin contrasted the Social-Democratic politicians, the anarchistically inclined individualists, who repudiate class solidarity and hate the whole world, with the revolutionary, who dedicates his life to the struggle for the liberation of the working class and all working people.

The professional revolutionary of the Leninist school

* *Politische Studien* No. 201, January-February 1972, p. 77.

does not oppose or stand above the masses. He is closely linked with them, a master of revolutionary struggle pursuing the goal of organising the masses instead of trying to replace their actions with his own revolutionary activity. Lenin attached great importance to a certain specialisation, to a division of labour among professional revolutionaries. However, as he saw it, the professional revolutionary had to be able to do much. This highly trained political leader of the working class, this spokesman of the people, could be an organiser of underground activities, a militant member of parliament, a trade union leader or a fighter at the barricades. A characteristic of a professional revolutionary of the Leninist school is that he is a militant, that he regards himself as belonging to an organisation, as being constantly in the ranks and always prepared for action. Lenin held that these were the cadres that could form organisations best able to lead the masses in large battles or skirmishes.* He insisted that the Party should always be in the thick of the mass struggle, that it should train political leaders capable of heading all the manifestations of this all-sided struggle and, when necessary, "dictate a positive programme of action" for the aroused students, the discontented *Zemstvo* people, the incensed religious sects, the offended elementary schoolteachers, etc., etc.**

The specific situation in which the Leninist Party sprang up in Russia left its imprint on the Party's structure and the way in which its political leaders were trained. In the beginning the Party could be nothing else than a small, secret organisation of professional revolutionaries. Bourgeois falsifiers and the revisionists attempt to interpret the appearance of professional revolutionaries in Russia in the early 20th century as an atypical development dictated solely by specific conditions and of no in-

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 11, p. 223.

** *Ibid.*, Vol. 5, p. 428.

terest to subsequent generations of revolutionaries. But the entire experience of history, not only of Russia, but of the whole international revolutionary movement, shows the special role played by professional revolutionaries in the building and work of the Party. In this lies one of the key universal organisational principles of Leninism. Professional revolutionaries showed that they were outstanding leaders of massive strikes and demonstrations and organisers of armed risings. Their voice was heard from the rostrum of the reactionary tsarist Duma. They were active in setting up mutual-aid funds. They organised legal newspapers and printed underground leaflets. And all this was accompanied by tireless work in theory, by the elaboration of advanced ideas, by unceasing quests for tactical decisions meeting with the requirements of the situation.

This is precisely why for decades, to this day, bourgeois and reformist propaganda has been unremittingly slandering professional revolutionaries of the Leninist school. A typical piece of slander is that they are depicted as a closed caste pursuing mercenary aims. Over a period of many years anti-communist propaganda created a sinister image of a revolutionary bringing nothing save destruction, inflaming the imagination of philistines and frightening them with all sorts of fables.

These fabrications about the Communists no longer have the same effect as in the past. New gimmicks are being brought into play. "Objective" presentations of history now receive prominence, with every encouragement given to "historical research" designed to distort the past and discredit the present-day cadre of the Communist parties. Here, for instance, is how this is being done by the former Menshevik Solomon M. Schwarz. He asserts that the "basic organisational idea of the Bolsheviks" was that the Party consisted mainly of "professional revolutionaries, who would submit to strict Party discipline and in turn educate the masses in a spirit of unquestioning

obedience to, and trust in, a Party they could not join and whose decisions they could not directly influence".

Schwarz follows in the footsteps of the usual bourgeois notions. His principal aim is to portray professional revolutionaries as despots, who tightly close the door of the Party and demand unquestioning obedience. Conceptions such as conviction and ideological principles are not to be found in the vocabulary of this former Menshevik. On the other hand, it turns out that it was only the Mensheviks who were anxious to draw "as many intelligent workers into the movement as possible ... so as to overcome the hegemony of 'professional revolutionaries' which inevitably gave the Party a closed, 'conspiratorial' character and prevented it from becoming truly the spearhead of the working class".*

Naturally, the author of this "unbiased" book says nothing of how many workers there were among the professional Bolshevik revolutionaries and of how Lenin underscored the political significance of the fact that in the Party committees there should be eight workers to every two intellectuals.**

According to Schwarz it was not the ruthless persecutions in tsarist Russia that denied the advanced contingent of the working class every possibility except acting underground. This, he alleges, was what the professional revolutionaries themselves wanted in order to maintain their hegemony in some specific interests of their own, of course. Schwarz does not say what these interests were. He feels that this argument puts him at some distance from the reactionary bourgeois authors writing about professional Bolshevik revolutionaries. But he labours in vain. He speaks essentially the same language as, for instance, the

* Solomon M. Schwarz, *The Russian Revolution of 1905. The Workers' Movement and the Formation of Bolshevism and Menshevism*, Chicago, 1967, p. 198.

** V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 8, p. 408.

bourgeois historian Trond Gilberg, who takes no trouble to mask the slant of his arguments.

Gilberg's prime objective is to depict professional revolutionaries as an élite and thereby awaken the distrust of the ordinary working people of the capitalist countries, who know perfectly well what the élite is like in their own countries. "From the moment Lenin appeared on the political scene," Gilberg writes, "he maintained that only the centrally directed, tightly disciplined élite Party, made up of professional revolutionaries and functioning on the principle of 'democratic centralism', could lead the revolution to a successful end."*

One can easily see why the venomous anti-communists display this heightened interest in the problem of professional revolutionaries. When the Great October Socialist Revolution triumphed, the leaders of the Communist parties that were formed in many countries aspired to obtain a thorough understanding of the experience of the Bolsheviks and learn how they won their victory. One of the principal aspects of this experience, which made a profound impression, was the formation and work of a core of professional revolutionaries.

Antonio Gramsci, with whose name the founding of the Italian Communist Party is associated, wrote of the Bolsheviks, of the professional revolutionaries, in June 1919: "They number approximately two thousand people, who have dedicated their lives to the study (in practice) of the political and economic sciences. During the decades spent in exile they made a probing, profound study of the various problems of the revolution; they were tempered in struggle, in unequal battle with the forces of tsarism, and developed an iron character in themselves; coming into direct contact with all forms of capitalist civilisation in Europe, Asia and America, they

* Trond Gilberg, *The Soviet Communist Party and Scandinavian Communism: The Norwegian Case*, Oslo, 1973, pp. 6-7.

scrupulously studied the orientations of the trends merging into the common torrent of world economic and historical development and acquired a distinct and clear understanding of their duty, a weapon as powerful and effective as the swords of the conquerors of entire empires. The Russian Communists are a first-class leading nucleus."*

At congresses of the Communist International, at plenary meetings of its Executive and at meetings of leaders of fraternal Communist parties there were frequent exchanges of views about the great significance of the role of professional revolutionaries. At the Fourth Congress of the Comintern in 1922 Béla Kun said that "no other Party, bourgeois or proletarian, had such a carefully picked and strongly welded nucleus ... as the Russian Party ... the Russian Communist Party in the course of its struggles not only developed its nucleus, but also brought new elements into the movement which became welded to the nucleus. It has become a Party really capable of organising and leading the masses, not hangers on, not intellectuals who refuse to submit to Party discipline, but real workers, the majority of the working class".**

At the same congress Clara Zetkin and other leaders spoke of the role of the Bolshevik cadres, who were "imbued with the revolutionary spirit and organisationally united".

The Comintern attached immense significance to the problem of professional revolutionaries. Along with consistent Marxists, the communist movement was joined by Left Socialists and anarcho-syndicalist elements, who still had to go through the school of revolutionary training and surmount the heritage of Social-Democracy and anarchism.

* Antonio Gramsci, *L'Ordine Nuovo 1919-1920*, Turin, 1954, p. 6.

** *Bulletin of the IV Congress of the Communist International* No. 9, Moscow, November 17, 1922, p. 14.

In "*Left-Wing*" Communism—an Infantile Disorder Lenin wrote that political parties, "as a general rule, are run by more or less stable groups composed of the most authoritative, influential and experienced members, who are elected to the most responsible positions, and are called leaders", but made the reservation that the Party "will not merit the name until it learns to weld the leaders into one indivisible whole with the class and the masses".*

The Comintern gave its unflagging attention to the education of such cadres who "must be trained in the sense that their work in preparing the revolution should not be a spare-time job; all their time must be given to the revolutionary struggle; they must be wholly and completely at the disposal of the Party".**

The very conception "professional revolutionary" has become part and parcel of the political vocabulary of the fighters against capitalism. Writing in his autobiography of the events of 1923, Maurice Thorez noted: "I became a cadre of the Party, a 'professional revolutionary'."***

In the Communist parties functioning underground and subjected to unceasing persecution, the professional revolutionaries are heroes in the true sense of the word, people who fearlessly sacrifice themselves for the sake of a great goal.

The Communist Party of South Africa has to operate against fearful odds. The strictest secrecy, brutal terror, deconcentration of cadres and constant concern for strengthening the African National Congress, which the Communists regard as the heart and soul of the liberation movement in Africa, are features of the conditions under which the struggle is waged against the racist imperialist regime. In 1970 when an extended plenary meeting of the

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 31, pp. 41, 50.

** *The Communist International 1919-1943*. Documents, Volume II, 1923-1928, London, 1960, pp. 197-98.

*** Maurice Thorez, *Fils du peuple*, Paris, 1960, p. 48.

Central Committee of the Communist Party of South Africa mapped out a series of new measures to promote the national liberation struggle, in the basic political resolution it was stated: "Believing firmly that the building of our Party as the Marxist-Leninist vanguard of the working class is a vitally important contribution to the victory in the common struggle, the meeting instructs the CC to direct its main efforts to the reconstruction of the Party at home as an organisation of professional revolutionaries, closely in contact with the working class and peasantry and able to carry on the propaganda and organisation of the Party in the face of police terror."*

In 1974 after the Portuguese Communist Party had swiftly grown from a Party mainly of professional revolutionaries into a mass Party of the working class, the bourgeois newspaper *Le Monde* mournfully wrote: "When you hear their reminiscences of the past, the story is always the same: underground work, arrests, torture, escapes and resumption of underground work."** But what grandeur of spirit lies behind this "monotony", what heroic biographies take shape in the ranks of the communist movement! Is not the life and work of Alvaro Cunhal, leader of the Portuguese Communists, who spent 13 years in prison and worked for many years under the stern conditions of the underground, an example of dedicated service?

The proportion of professional revolutionaries among Party members changes depending on historical conditions. In the parties that function legally and have become mass organisations, their number is relatively small. At the 13th Congress of the Italian Communist Party it was stated that of the million and a half members only a few hundred Communists were conducting Party work as professionals. "No other large Party in Italy has such a small number

* A. Lerumo, *Fifty Fighting Years. The Communist Party of South Africa 1921-1971*, London, 1971, p. 110.

** *Le Monde*, May 28, 1974.

of functionaries.”* There are professional revolutionaries in every Communist Party in whatever situation it has to conduct the struggle. The relevant paragraph was long ago included in the Rules of the ICP, while in the Rules adopted at its 13th Congress it is stated: “The Party’s mass character and the complexity of its functions, combined with historical experience, which shows the utility and importance of professional revolutionaries, require that a certain number of Communists should devote themselves to Party work as full-time Party functionaries.”**

Day after day these people conduct gruelling revolutionary work, receiving from the Party the average wage of a skilled factory worker. They differ from bourgeois politicians not only by their views but by their entire being, by their way of life, setting the model of the new type of political leader. For bourgeois members of parliament election to an organ of state power is a source of new and not inconsiderable incomes, but for the Communist it is only a new area of struggle for the interests of the working class and all other working people. Communist MPs turn over their salaries to the Party. The ICP’s budget in 1974 received 6,000 million liras from membership dues, and 1,500 million liras from MPs’ contributions.***

The Communist parties adhere to Lenin’s view that professional revolutionaries play a major role in the development of the communist movement and categorically denounce the Right-revisionist and “Leftist” allegations that the conception “professional revolutionary” has lost its significance today.

Professional revolutionaries are indispensable to every Communist Party, and for that reason most of the lies and

* XIII Congresso del Partito comunista italiano. *Atti e risoluzioni*, p. 64.

** Ibid., p. 523.

*** *World Marxist Review*, October 1974, p. 19.

attacks are directed against them, and for that reason the words “professional revolutionary” arouse the animosity of all the enemies of Leninism.

The Communist parties do not by any means regard that it is correct to increase the number of professional revolutionaries without limit, but they hold that it is mandatory to enlarge the body of activists, among whom there can always be found people satisfying the high requirements of true revolutionary cadres. At congresses of the French Communist Party it was noted with satisfaction that in its organisations the Party had tens of thousands of experienced and energetic Communists who were devoted to the working class and the mass of the people. The French Communist Party believes that one of its prime tasks and a sure way to win greater strength are to train these Communists politically and ideologically and promote them to responsible positions along with experienced Party cadres.

While regarding the formation of the Party leadership as a task requiring constant and not momentary attention and safeguarding the leading nucleus from infiltration by people who do not meet with the high requirements, the Communist parties abide by Lenin’s precept that the leadership must be linked with the masses and that the leading nucleus can under no circumstances be turned into a closed circle.

In keeping with the Leninist tradition, the Communist parties, in their striving to become mass organisations wherever they are still numerically small and become still larger, wherever they have developed into big organisations, regard the formation of a strong core of cadres as an indispensable condition of their growth and mass support.

The Communist parties of many countries regard the problem of cadres as their most crucial issue. At their congresses they make the point that the obtaining conditions require a faster growth and greater vigour in the

policy of training cadres, for this is directly linked with the Party's leading role among the masses.

The decisions of the congresses of many Communist parties underscore that the training of cadres, of Party functionaries, is a permanent task. At the 21st Congress of the Communist Party of Canada in 1971 it was stated that the training and systematic promotion of leading cadres were of paramount significance in furthering the work of the Party. It was stressed that the formation of the Party leadership was a continuous process requiring the combination of the energy and strength of young people with the maturity and experience of senior comrades.

The Communist parties point out that the systematic strengthening of the Party leadership at all levels is of vital significance, and that it is necessary to bring into the leadership energetic and devoted functionaries who have been tested in the battles of the working class and in mass popular movements. The Party gathers more strength as it becomes more active, and the stronger its leadership and its links with the masses the greater become its possibilities for influencing the mass struggle.

In this respect the experience of the Communist Party of India is instructive. It considers that for a long time one of the basic reasons for its shortcomings was its shortage of cadres. When it established closer links with the masses, a qualitatively new situation arose as regards the formation of cadres. Its Ninth Congress (1971) noted that innumerable activists, who turn to the Communist Party, come forward from the ranks of the working people in the course of the mass struggle. The congress passed a resolution, which stated: "...The Party has to win and train new young cadres, enlist large numbers of whole-timers and also to preserve the old experienced cadres." Moreover, it was decided to enhance the prestige of professional revolutionaries, painstakingly study the problems and resolve the difficulties encountered by professional functionaries, and give them a merited and honourable

position in the Party. The congress declared that it was necessary to work out and give effect to a programme "for the education and training of wholtime cadres".*

Since the close of the 1960s there has been a juvenescence of cadres and the promotion of leaders from among new generations of Communists in many Communist parties, including such small parties as the Danish and such large parties as the French. At the recent congresses of the French Communist Party 40 per cent of the delegates were under 30, while at the 21st Extraordinary Congress in 1974 the average age of the delegates was 30. At the 20th Congress of the same Party (1972) 30 per cent of the Central Committee was renewed through the enlistment of young people. The average age of the delegates to the 33rd Congress of the Communist Party of Great Britain (1973) was 34.8.

Today the functionaries of the Communist parties have to be steeled ideologically and have a sound Marxist-Leninist training. But this is not all. In order to offer their alternative to the bourgeois "incomes policy", Party cadres have to have a profound knowledge of specific economic problems. Without a knowledge of the relevant problems it is impossible to count on success in the struggle for a democratic alternative to the regional policies of governments that doom entire areas to stagnation and degradation, to the policies of the ruling classes in questions of education, medicare and town building. Growing importance is today being acquired by the specialised training of professional revolutionaries.

In many countries thousands upon thousands of Communists are elected municipal counsellors and mayors, and to leading positions in the trade unions, and everywhere they have to demonstrate the ability to combine the class consistency of political leaders championing the interests of the working people with a profound knowledge

* *Party Life*, November 1971, p. 10.

of specific economic, cultural and social problems. At the congresses of a number of Communist parties and in the Party press it is emphasised that along with a sound political training cadres must have specialised knowledge. "In order to understand the entanglements of events," it is stated in the journal of the French Communists, "we must have economists, philosophers and experts on trade union and political affairs. In short, we must have people who know their way in all the intricate problems of our epoch."*

Many Communist parties are setting up commissions and groups consisting of Communists with specialised knowledge in various fields of science and culture. These commissions conduct research and make recommendations in their relevant spheres.

The moral make-up of the people fighting for the new society is of immense political significance in the training of Communists, particularly of leading cadres. The moral make-up of the political leader of the new type, of the Communist, of the incorruptible fighter for the interests of the working people, acquires tremendous attractive force today when the false moral values implanted by the bourgeoisie are collapsing in the eyes of millions of people, particularly of young people, when corruption, financial swindles and underhand dealings have become the hallmark of political intrigues. At the 14th Congress of the Communist Party of Chile (1969) it was stated with pride that the revolutionary honesty of the Communists was impeccable. This was borne out by all subsequent developments, by the struggle of the Communist Party for the victory of the Popular Unity bloc and during the administration under Salvador Allende. The courageous, sustained struggle of the Communists after the military fascist coup is an example of moral staunchness and honour.

* *Cahiers du communisme*, December 1971, p. 62.

The Rules of some Communist parties contain provisions requiring Communists to display a comradely attitude to their colleagues at their place of work and to working people generally, and to set an example in personal life, in their family life, and in their relations with neighbours. This is particularly important in the case of Communists who are prominent in the Party, in social and political life.

The Communist parties have every reason to be proud that their cadres differ fundamentally from other political personalities of the capitalist world, where politics is frequently regarded as a dirty business. By their actions the revolutionaries of the Leninist type prove that politics in the interests of the people, that the political work of Communists is honourable work. The closer such professional politicians are linked with the working masses, and the more active the entire Party, to whose ideals they dedicate their lives, the more successful their training becomes.

While stressing the role played by their political cadres in the class struggle, the Communist parties constantly refer to the unfading significance of Bolshevik experience.

In the Central Committee report to the 16th Congress of the French Communist Party in 1961 it was forcefully recalled that "in speaking of the role of leaders, Lenin pointed out: 'Not a single class in history has achieved power without producing its political leaders, its prominent representatives able to organise and lead it.'"* At the 19th Congress of the Communist Party of the USA (1969), which operates in the face of formidable difficulties in the citadel of world imperialism, the delegates listened with emotion and pride to Lenin's famous words from *What Is to Be Done?* quoted in the report delivered by the Party Chairman Henry Winston: "We are marching in a compact group along a precipitous and difficult

* *Parti Communiste Français. XVI^e Congrès, Saint-Denis, 11-14 mai 1961*, p. 77.

path, firmly holding each other by the hand. We are surrounded on all sides by enemies, and we have to advance almost constantly under their fire.”* These words, directed against those who tried to push the revolutionaries of Russia into the mire of opportunism, are now too a weapon of the international communist movement. They sound as a hymn to professional revolutionaries and, at the same time, as a call to struggle against those who oppose the vanguard character of the Communist Party.

“When Lenin began his work as a revolutionary,” Leonid Brezhnev said, “there were only a few dozen Marxists in Russia. When Lenin’s Party came to power, it had 350,000 people in its ranks, which had the backing of millions. This was a victory for Lenin and the Leninists, a victory which enabled Russia—and the whole world with her—to step forward into a new historical epoch.”**

2. THE PRINCIPLES UNDERLYING THE ENLARGEMENT OF THE PARTY RANKS

Even in the period when the Bolshevik Party was formed under the extremely difficult conditions of the underground, Lenin held that the Party organisations should not consist exclusively of professional revolutionaries, and much less did he consider it correct to narrow the Party when the possibility arose of enlarging its ranks.

During the discussion of the Rules at the Second Congress of the RSDLP he spoke sharply against the insistence of the Party’s opportunist wing to equate a Party member to any striker, to open the doors of the Party to any liberal professor. He was emphatically opposed to equating the Party with the class.

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 5, p. 355.

** L. I. Brezhnev, *The CPSU in the Struggle for Unity of All Revolutionary and Peace Forces*, p. 162.

Right-wing Social-Democracy has long ago entirely removed the question of whom to enlist into its ranks. It is prepared to accept anybody voting for it. More, it does not scruple to use any means of pressure in order to compel people to join its ranks. In many countries it is impossible to receive even the job of a charwoman in the municipal councils headed by Social-Democrats without first joining their party.

At the Second Congress of the RSDLP Trotsky argued that it would be possible to establish the power of the working class when “the Party and the working class . . . were closest to becoming identified”, and the proletariat itself comprised the majority of the nation.* He repeated almost word for word his forerunner and contemporary Parvus, who said that the “masses are more revolutionary than the Party”.** Hence the conclusion that a Party can be revolutionary only if it embraces the entire mass of people who have joined in the struggle. It was declared that the ideal Party corresponded in composition and number to the participants in the revolutionary movement.

This failure to see the difference between the Party and the working class was subsequently displayed by Trotskyism time and again. True, having found that they are not destined to go beyond the framework of a sect, the present-day Trotskyists have begun to “explain” their political isolation as being due to the fact that “the team which does not know its job cannot replace the expert”. By “the team which does not know its job” they mean those who do not merit being among the “picked personalities” on whose will the success of the struggle depends.

Leninism clearly formulates the proposition that the Party can only be part of the class, its advanced, conscious part. At the Second Congress of the RSDLP Lenin said that

* *The Second Congress of the RSDLP*, p. 136 (in Russian).

** Reidar Larsson, *Theories of Revolution. From Marx to the First Russian Revolution*, Stockholm, 1970, p. 372.

it was dangerous "to make Party members of *all and sundry*", adding "we must strive to raise the title and the significance of a Party member higher, higher and still higher".*

This fundamental proposition is seen in all Lenin's pronouncements about the Party as the vanguard of the working class, regardless of the changes in the historical situation. It will remain in force throughout the epoch as long as there is a need for the Party. At the Second Congress of the Comintern in 1920 Lenin applied to the specifics and tasks of the international communist movement what he had worked out for the Bolshevik Party, saying, "...the most characteristic feature of working-class political parties is that they can involve only a minority of their class. A political Party can comprise only a minority of a class, in the same way as the really class-conscious workers in any capitalist society constitute only a minority of all workers. We are therefore obliged to recognise that it is only this class-conscious minority that can direct and lead the broad masses of the workers".**

This key principle of Party construction, fundamental to Marxism-Leninism and valid for all time, manifests itself as a specific historical factor depending on the changes in the situation. In 1903, when the Bolshevik Party was being formed, Lenin was against any unduly broad interpretation of the conception "Party member". Two years later, when the first Russian revolution broke out, he criticised those who artificially barred the flow of fresh forces into the Party.

He acted in conformity with the situation in which the Party operated, and with the development of the Party itself. On March 8, 1905, the Bolshevik newspaper *Uper-yod* printed Lenin's article "New Tasks and New Forces", in which he wrote of the significant changes in the

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 6, pp. 503, 504.

** Ibid., Vol. 31, p. 235.

mass working-class movement when "new forces would spring up, seemingly out of the ground" and made the point that "we must considerably increase the membership of all Party and Party-connected organisations in order to be able to keep up to some extent with the stream of popular revolutionary energy which has been a hundred-fold strengthened".* If the Party proved to be unable, boldly and with enterprise, to set up new organisations, he wrote, "we shall have to give up as groundless all pretensions to the role of vanguard". He expressed the confidence that under pressure from the course of revolutionary events and with energetic action by the Party people would turn "at first into democratic assistants and then into convinced members of the Social-Democratic working-class party".**

Events showed that Lenin was right. The Third Congress of the RSDLP (April 1905) rejected the first paragraph of the Party Rules as adopted in its Menshevik wording by the Second Congress. The paragraph in question stated that it was not necessary for a Party member to work in a Party organisation, thereby undermining the Party's vanguard character. The congress passed Lenin's formulation that a person could only be regarded as a Party member if he personally took part in the work of one of its organisations.

After the congress Lenin worked harder to enlarge the Party ranks. In the article "The Reorganisation of the Party", published in November 1905 in three issues of the Bolshevik newspaper *Novaya zhizn*, which on account of the developing revolution was printed legally, Lenin wrote of those who feared a mass influx of new members into the Party: "Don't invent bugaboos, comrades!" The danger of the Party dissolving in the masses, of ceasing to be the conscious advanced contingent of the working class

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 8, pp. 211, 217.

** Ibid., pp. 219-20.

"could undoubtedly become a *very serious* one if we showed any inclination towards demagoguery, if we lacked Party principles (programme, tactical rules, organisational experience) entirely, or if those principles were feeble and shaky. But the fact is that no such 'ifs' exist".*

The Bolsheviks steadfastly combated the least manifestation of demagoguery, demanded class consciousness on the part of new members, emphasised the enormous importance of continuity in Party development and required discipline and the training of *all* members in a Party organisation. They had a clear-cut programme, tactical guidelines and organisational experience, and under these conditions new members who could bring with them elements of instability and vacillation "can be influenced, and they will submit to the influence of the steadfast and solid core of Social-Democrats".**

Lenin adopted the same specific historical approach to membership of the parties of the Communist International. The 21 terms of admission to the Comintern, which closed the international communist movement to infiltration by opportunists, were passed at the Second Congress (1920). There was a sharp debate over this issue. The formation of a genuinely revolutionary leadership in each of the parties in the Comintern was of decisive importance to the destiny of the movement. Giacinto Serrati, who headed the Centrist wing in the Italian Socialist Party and insisted on its admission to the Comintern, declared at the congress that the Communist International should be open to all parties that could accomplish the revolution together with the Communist parties, and that all arguments could take place afterwards. He was against purging the parties of opportunists, contending that the movement should not lose even those leaders whose significance was purely decorative. He stated that with regard

* Ibid., Vol. 10, pp. 32, 31.

** Ibid., p. 32.

to new members the Comintern had no yardstick of sincerity. Lenin remarked that such a yardstick would be found.

The Comintern sought to admit only true revolutionaries capable of devoting themselves sincerely and entirely to the struggle for the new society. It held that a Communist had to be able to act as a leader of a strike or trade union, as the organiser of an underground group, as the secretary of a Party organisation, as an agitator at mass rallies, as a member of parliament, cooperator or fighter at the barricades, and that in all cases he had to remain a disciplined and dedicated militant.

The nucleus of the Comintern was formed of such militants and this made it possible to set the further task of turning the Communist parties into mass organisations. The Third Comintern Congress (1921), convened at a time when the revolutionary wave was ebbing, required that the Communists should go to the masses in order to win over the majority of the working class and other working people. The discussion that preceded this congress and continued at its sittings showed that the high demands made by the Communist parties of their members should have nothing in common with sectarian seclusion and the aspiration to restrict membership of the parties solely to outstanding personalities.

Lenin and his supporters resolutely opposed the view that a revolutionary Party could not be a mass organisation in general. For instance, speaking of the United Communist Party of Germany, Herman Gorter of the Netherlands, who propounded ultra-Left views, argued: "As a mass Party it will never have sufficient strength."* Representatives of the sectarian Communist Workers' Party of Germany held that for a Communist Party to admit the masses to membership meant losing the purity of its ranks and principles.

* *Protokoll des III. Kongresses der Kommunistischen Internationale (Moskau, 22. Juni bis 12. Juli 1921)*, Hamburg, 1921, p. 189.

At the Third Comintern Congress Lenin did not deny that the revolution could be started and brought to a victorious end by a very small Party, but he made the point that victory would be achieved only if the Party had the support of the majority of the exploited people of town and country. He regarded principled objections to the Communist parties becoming mass organisations as a sectarian striving to do without the masses, as an intention to accomplish the revolution solely by Communists. The speeches made by Lenin at this congress and his approval of the views of Bohumir Šmeral, who said that it was important for the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia to become a mass organisation, showed the importance he attached to turning the Communist parties into mass organisations. This was the keynote of the congress' theses on tactics, in which it was stressed that the direct participation of the worker masses in the struggle and the leadership of that struggle would lead to the creation of battle-stepped "*large revolutionary mass Communist parties*".* In the theses on the organisational structure of the Communist parties it was noted that "large mass parties must, in particular, ... always be prepared for mass political action".**

However, not all the Communists considered that the Communist parties should aspire to become mass organisations. For instance, even after the Third Comintern Congress Umberto Terracini, a leading member of the Italian Communist Party, declared that the desirability of mass parties was highly debatable.

Those who were opposed to the Communist parties becoming mass organisations founded their arguments not on the specifics of the situation in which these parties had to operate but on the abstract proposition that a mass Party could not be revolutionary.

* *Lenin and the Communist International*, Moscow, 1970, p. 335 (in Russian).

** *Ibid.*, p. 369.

This non-historical bias was profoundly alien to a true revolutionary spirit. In the same way as he regarded the conception "mass" not abstractly but as depending on the breadth of the mass movement and the tasks confronting that movement,* Lenin always linked the question of enlarging the Party with the actual situation. For him the problem of membership was of fundamental and specific historical significance. Even during the most difficult periods of the revolutionary struggle he did not for a moment doubt that the situation could change quickly and that a numerically small Party could prove to be capable of becoming a mass organisation. In 1916, he showed the sterility of the conclusion of those who were prepared to renounce an active struggle against social-chauvinism on the grounds that true revolutionary internationalists were numerically weak, writing: "Nonsense! Take France in 1780, or Russia in 1900. The politically conscious and determined revolutionaries, who in France represented the bourgeoisie—the revolutionary class of that era—and in Russia today's revolutionary class—the proletariat, were extremely weak numerically. They were only a few, comprising at the most only 1/10,000, or even 1/100,000, of their class. Several years later, however, these few, this allegedly negligible minority, led the masses, millions and tens of millions of people."**

The history of the communist movement offers many examples to show how in a revolutionary situation numerically small but well-organised parties quickly become mass organisations. With the downfall of the fascist dictatorship in Italy the Italian Communist Party, which had played an outstanding part in the Resistance, grew in three years from an organisation with a few thousand members in 1943 into a mass political force. The Communists worked to enlist into the Party people who had

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 32, p. 476.

** *Ibid.*, Vol. 23, pp. 199-200.

fought as partisans, all people who were devoted to the cause of the anti-fascist struggle. And they achieved their aim.

At the close of 1945 the ICP had over 1,700,000 members. Needless to say, this Party, in which the number of veteran members comprised only a small percentage, became an essentially new Party. The tasks on which the Communists had to concentrate their efforts likewise became entirely new. This gave some Party members the pretext for asserting that in Italy the Leninist understanding of the Party of the new type had lost its significance and that a Party of some other "new type" was emerging. Underlying assertions of this kind was the assumption that a Leninist Party could not be a mass organisation.

These views received no support. Writing retrospectively of the intention to form not a new Party but a Party of some other "new type", Palmiro Togliatti noted: "Had we done that, I believe we would have made a historical and political mistake. To create a Party of the *new type* means to create a Communist Party and break with Social-Democratic organisation, ideology and traditions. We had, however, formed the Communist Party in 1921 ... and fought for its advance along the road of Marxism-Leninism. ... For that reason we declared that *our* Party, precisely our Party, must be renewed, i.e., acquire a whole set of new qualities, which it did not have and which must give it the possibility of becoming a mass Party."^{*}

These new qualities included the ability to establish contact with the broad and most diverse strata of the population and make its own presence felt everywhere. The mass Party becomes a major factor of national political life. But a Party that admits a large number of new members cannot, of course, count on these members having mastered the Marxist-Leninist teaching before joining the

^{*} Palmiro Togliatti, *Problemi del movimento operaio internazionale (1956-1961)*, Rome, 1962, pp. 258-59.

Communist ranks and acquired the features that must distinguish members of the Party of the new type.

Guided by dialectical materialism, the Italian Communist Party found it possible to admit people who had not yet surmounted religious views. When the Fifth Congress of the ICP (December 29, 1945-January 6, 1946) decided to enlarge the Party ranks in this manner, Palmiro Togliatti said at that congress: "This in no way signifies that we wish to abolish our Party or the glorious traditions and principles by which it is guided in its policy. This merely signifies that in the face of the scale and difficulties of the tasks we have to carry out, we are aware that we can fulfil our historical role of leaders of the entire Italian people, of leading them along the road of anti-fascist and progressive democracy, only if we open the doors of our Party precisely in this way and have in it all the elements needed to establish contact with all strata of the working masses and provide them with leadership."^{*}

While giving the Party new possibilities, the enlargement of its ranks harbours certain dangers and generates difficulties. There can be no certainty that given an unfavourable turn of events all the people who had joined the Party at a time when things were going well will remain firm and staunch. The Bolshevik Party, which became a mass organisation during the first Russian revolution, lost many of its members when the revolution was defeated. Unstable elements left the Party. But the core remained and grew stronger, and this enabled the Party to become a mass organisation once again during the years of the new revolutionary upswing.

The Party does not spontaneously evolve from a numerically small into a mass organisation. This takes place as a result of the Party's activities, its ability to work in any situation without losing heart, confidence and faith in the future. After the defeat of the first Russian revolution

^{*} Palmiro Togliatti, *Rinnovare l'Italia*, Rome, 1946, p. 78.

Lenin denounced the pseudo-revolutionaries who felt it was beneath them to "strengthen organisation", writing: "Our heroes of the revolutionary 'screech' turn up their noses at such a humble, innocent task, which does not promise 'immediately', at once, tomorrow morning, to provide a roar and a crash."*

Even after the defeat the Bolsheviks proved capable of working with the same staunchness and perseverance as during the revolution and of preserving the Party tradition.

The membership of the Italian Communist Party, which exceeded 2,000,000, began to diminish during the cold war, but the Party remained a mass organisation. There are innumerable facts to show that many of the people who take part in Party activities, attend political circles and carry out social assignments, broaden their world outlook, become more class conscious and support all the measures instituted by the Party.

Nevertheless, the question of whether a mass Party can play the role of a political vanguard keeps coming up from time to time, and while it is not broadly discussed it is considered in one way or another in the communist press. In connection with the fact that since 1972 the Italian Communist Party's membership began to grow again, showing one of the highest postwar increment rates, some Italian Communists began arguing that the "ICP is evolving from a *Party leading the struggle of the masses* into a Party serving only as the vehicle of articulating opinion".**

The views that the growth of the Party prejudices its vanguard role make themselves felt, and the Communist parties explain that these views are wrong.

One of the sections of a long article headed "The Working Class and Its Party in History", written by three

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 15, p. 154.

** *Critica marxista*, May-August 1973, p. 26.

leading staff members of the Maurice Thorez Institute, is entitled "Party of the Vanguard, Party of the Masses". The authors show that today there is the need for a Party that is represented everywhere, that sinks roots in the masses, particularly at factories, residential districts, villages. It must be a Party of the masses in the sense of being closely linked with the masses, taking part in all their struggles and having a numerous membership and a large number of local organisations. "But a question arises, which, while not being new, can restrict the Party's possibilities, depending on how it is answered: Is there a contradiction between a vanguard Party and a Party of the masses? Are the concepts vanguard Party and Party of the masses mutually excluding?" After reviewing how this problem was formulated throughout the history of the French Communist Party, the authors refer to the growing aspiration of the French working people for changes and draw the conclusion that the mass character of the Party is a power that is "inseparable from its vanguard role". Under present-day conditions a mass Party can fulfil its vanguard role more successfully. "Thus, far from excluding each other, the concept 'vanguard Party' and 'Party of the masses' reinforce each other.'"

In the discussion that preceded the 21st Extraordinary Congress of the FCP (October 1974), the question was raised, among others, whether the Party's vanguard role was prejudiced by its striving to enlist more members, by opening its doors to all people demanding far-reaching democratic changes. At the congress it was stressed that it was vital for the working class, the entire French people to have a more influential, stronger and more active Communist Party. The FCP's membership had therefore to be sharply increased. Through participation in the Party's democratic life and in its work new members would mas-

* *Cahiers d'histoire de l'Institut Maurice Thorez* No. 7, 1974, pp. 100, 102.

ter scientific theory and make every effort to give effect to the Party's policy. "In the ranks of the French Communist Party," the relevant resolution states, "new members shall take their place in the vanguard of the struggle for profound democratic reforms, at the same time acquiring experience and mastering the Party's theory. To be a Communist thus means to participate in the struggle for advanced democracy, to contribute actively to the ultimate triumph of socialism."

Immediately after the presidential elections in 1974 the French Communist Party started a massive membership drive. Anti-communism fears the Communist parties becoming mass organisations. In *Communism in France*, a volume of anti-communist essays published in 1968, some bourgeois sociologists made it clear that instead of the FCP they would prefer to see the appearance "of a second Communist Party, pure and very small".*

This is eloquent evidence that the present epoch with its new conditions of struggle for socialism requires mass Communist parties, that it requires those parties that have already become large to reinforce their ranks still further, and those that are still small to make every effort to rise to a new rung that will lead to their growth into mass organisations. The deepening of capitalism's general crisis and the swing of the masses to the Left are opening new prospects for the growth of the Communist parties.

In 1964 the Communist Party of India had 107,000 members. By the time the 10th Congress (January 1975) was held its membership had increased to over 355,000. In the course of 1974 alone, 100,000 people joined the Party. There had never been such an influx before. The Communist Party of India believes that it is quite realistic to expect its membership to reach half a million within a very short span of time. It is constantly strengthening its

* *Le communisme en France et en Italie*, Vol. 1, *Le communisme en France*, Paris, 1969, p. 65.

links with the masses. At its Tamil Nadu conference in 1975 it was noted that there had been a numerical and organisational growth of such CPI-oriented mass organisations as the trade unions, peasant unions and the union of farm labourers. This had allowed the CPI to conduct a number of massive campaigns in defence of the interests of urban and rural working people.*

In the political resolution of the 14th Congress of the Communist Party of Argentina (1973) it is stated that the Argentine reactionaries had attempted to destroy the Communist Party but that their attempt had failed. The Communist Party had become an important factor in the life of the nation. "A continuous numerical growth of the Party's ranks, with 200,000 members as the target, must be ensured. This will be the starting point of the creation of a mass Communist Party."**

What is the Communist of today like? What is the make-up of the member of a mass Party or a Party striving to become a large political force? Each country, naturally, has its own specifics, but everywhere the Communist is an advanced person closely linked with the people.

Of course, in a mass Party not everybody becomes a hero at once, and the numerical growth of the Party ranks confronts the Party core with complex problems, the chief of which is to draw the new members into active work. The Italian Communists say self-critically: "Millions of men and women look with trust to the Party, which has been and is being joined by hundreds of thousands of young women and men. However, we do not always have the ability to give a proper reception in our midst to the comrades who come to us; we do not always facilitate access for them to leading and other responsible posts; we do not always manage to infuse them with our Party's

* *Pravda*, January 5, 1975.

** *Nueva era* No. 8 (214), 1973, p. 238.

glorious history and traditions, to imbue them with the initiative that should be further developed.”*

This explains the importance the Communist parties attach to intensifying inner-Party educational work, to enhancing the militancy of every primary organisation, to promoting the initiative and activity of each Communist.

At the 24th Congress of the Communist Party of Denmark (1973) it was stated with satisfaction that there was a steady influx of new members, particularly young people, and the conclusion was drawn that “this influx can and should be increased. In this work it must be taken into account that for many people membership of the Party is a step that requires the surmounting of old prejudices”. The congress resolution accentuates the importance of active Party life in the primary organisations and of a tactful attitude and comradely mutual assistance in drawing new members into the Party. “The Party must become the home of new members and of people sympathising with it.”

The history of the reformist degeneration of the Social-Democratic parties shows that their make-up was affected by the infiltration of petty-bourgeois elements and the drive for the votes of the petty bourgeoisie. This always serves as a warning to Communists.

The Hungarian and Czechoslovak Communists drew serious lessons from the counter-revolutionary events in Hungary (1956) and in Czechoslovakia (1968).

After Hungary was liberated from fascism the Party grew so swiftly that its numerical strength compared with that of the working class proved to be too high. At the Seventh Congress of the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party (1959), János Kádár, First Secretary of the Central Committee, said: “It is our experience that the numerical strength of the Party is of fundamental significance when the question arises whether the Party can retain its charac-

* *Rinascita* No. 43, November 3, 1972, p. 12.

ter as the vanguard contingent. The Central Committee is of the opinion that in previous years the Party's numerical strength was so large that its role of advanced contingent was jeopardised.”* Steps were taken to limit the Party's numerical strength and this allowed enhancing its vanguard, leading role.

There was a similar situation in Czechoslovakia. After that country's liberation the Communist Party's membership grew from 30,000 to almost one and a half million in two and a half years. A further rapid growth of the Party's membership was observed after the victory of the working class in February 1948. Gustav Husák, General Secretary of the Party's Central Committee, noted that the Party was joined by many people who had left other parties and by uncommitted people who had not freed themselves of bourgeois ideology, Social-Democratic habits and even nationalistic views. “There were inhabited localities and even entire districts where practically every adult was a Party member. In the years when, after two checks, 900,000 members left the Party, its social composition did not improve and its revolutionary ideology was not consolidated. On the contrary, the Party's social structure continued to deteriorate. If to this is added the mounting formalism throughout the system of Party work, the shortcomings in the ideological education of the membership, the subjectivism in the adoption of decisions and the frequent improvisation in politics, we shall get a full picture of the situation that facilitated the rapid growth of the Right-opportunist and anti-socialist forces in 1968.”**

The history and tragedy of the Communist Party of Indonesia are revealing. In the 1960s its leadership, which was increasingly coming under the influence of the

* János Kádár, *Selected Articles and Speeches, 1957-1960*, Moscow, 1960, p. 546 (Russian translation).

** Gustav Husák, *Selected Articles and Speeches, October 1969-July 1973*, Moscow, 1973, p. 215 (Russian translation).

Maoists, steered a course which doomed that Communist Party, then the largest in the non-socialist world (in 1965 it had between three and four million members), to passivity and the renunciation of its vanguard role. Its leadership pursued an opportunist policy. In the Address of the CPI Marxist-Leninist Group, formed after the Party's bloody destruction by the reactionaries, it is stated: "... We became less preoccupied with mass revolutionary actions, we engaged in class cooperation with the bourgeoisie and we were gradually losing our political independence."**

But history also knows of instances where even those Communist parties, which, by virtue of the concrete historical specifics of their countries, had initially to accept mainly people of petty-bourgeois origin, developed into militant, genuinely revolutionary vanguards of the working class and the entire people. In the development of a Communist Party the decisive role is played by the policy that is pursued by its leadership, by the cadres forming its backbone and guiding force.

Ho Chi Minh, founder of the Vietnam Workers' Party, wrote in 1958: "Ours is a mass Party having hundreds of thousands of members. Due to our history, most Party members in our country come from a petty-bourgeois milieu. There is nothing surprising about this. Some Party members, being influenced by bourgeois ideology, did not take a firm stand at first and had vague convictions and incorrect views. In the course of the revolution and the war of Resistance, however, our Party members became on the whole good Communists devoted to the Party and the revolution."***

A fundamental condition for this development of a mass Party was correct leadership in keeping with Marxism-Leninism and proletarian internationalism.

* *L'Humanité*, December 9, 1967.

** *World Marxist Review*, September 1972, p. 29.

A mass character is thus not yet the guarantee that a political organisation is strong. It becomes the source of a Party's strength when a Marxist-Leninist policy is pursued consistently. The degree to which a Party's mass character reinforces its strength depends largely on the leadership, on the cadres of the Party. There is a close bond between professional revolutionaries, without whom no Marxist-Leninist Party is conceivable, and the possibility of turning the Party into a mass organisation. Without being a Party of cadres, the Communist Party cannot become a Party of the masses. But if the Party cadres do not aspire to enlarge the membership when the conditions are favourable, the Party may lose its militancy.

The history of the international communist movement teaches that the question of a Party's numerical strength cannot be raised abstractedly, independently of the historical conditions and the tasks facing the Party. Whereas in some situations an enlargement of the Party ranks is unjustified, in others reluctance to increase the membership may result in sectarian seclusion.

Needless to say, as in the past, when the Communist parties expand their links with the masses they aim primarily to have the working class as their mainstay. Equally alien to them are the revisionist, scornful, high-handed attitude to the working class and the policy of "ouvrierism", an orientation solely on the proletariat coupled with a demonstrative unwillingness to work with other, non-proletarian social strata.

What is the criterion that helps to determine the Party's policy in the question of the growth of its ranks? There is only one such criterion. The numerical strength of a Party's membership must be such that without erasing the boundaries distinguishing the Party from the uncommitted mass it gives the Party the maximum possibility for carrying out its vanguard, leading role.

A PARTY OF ACTION

The Communists are intolerant of passivity and inertness, of letting things drift. In pursuance of their aim of not only explaining but also remaking the world, the Marxists-Leninists advocate an active struggle, revolutionary action. The words of the Marxist-Leninist parties of action are not at variance with their deeds.

Most of the anarchists, the diverse Leftist groups and other adversaries of Marxism-Leninism proclaim themselves in favour of revolutionary action. The reformists and Right revisionists, who have no stomach for the revolutionary activity of the Communist parties, likewise do not by any means always oppose action. In a certain sense they acknowledge the need for action.

But what must be regarded as action contributing to the development of the revolutionary process? One and the same word can be given a different content, and this is perhaps truer of the conception "revolutionary action" than many others. Here the watershed is the different attitude to the actions of the masses, to the forms of these actions, to the role that various political schools accord to the mass struggle.

1. OPPORTUNISTS VERSUS MASS ACTION

In most of the European countries the reformist parties are large organisations. They are supported by fairly broad sections of the population, including a considerable segment of the working class. The reformists, of course, value this support, seek it and in words do not deny the role played by the masses in society. But for all varieties of Right opportunism, from undisguised reformists, who flaunt their hostility for Marxism, to the revisionists, who prefer to act under the cover of "renewing" the Marxist teaching, the masses are, above all, electors.

By trying to persuade the working people that the mechanism of bourgeois democracy provides all the means for resolving social problems and conflicts, the opportunists actively oppose any action ranging beyond the boundaries of the "democratic procedures" set by the bourgeoisie. As they see it, participation in elections is the highest form of mass activity. In the interim between elections all problems are handled by the people endowed with the trust of the electors. Negotiations, consultations, agreements and compromises are offered as the principal means of both the political and the social struggle.

Extra-parliamentary action is condemned. It is declared that everything can be settled through parliament. Allowance is only made for strikes sanctioned by the trade union leaders. If the workers find that the trade union leaders have adopted a conciliatory attitude and take independent action, such strikes are declared "wild". They are condemned even if the demands put forward are fully justified.

In the reformist trade unions, parliamentary agencies and other links of the social institutions won by elections one finds bureaucracy, inertia and long-established procedures for settling issues. It would, however, be unjust to accuse them of total passivity. Functionaries of the reformist organisations are extremely active during elec-

tion campaigns, and although their activity is not confined to these campaigns, it would be no exaggeration to say that all their energy is ultimately subordinated to preventing action of a revolutionary character.

The leaders of the Socialist parties themselves frequently admit that capitalist development suits them perfectly well.

In practice the actions of the social-reformists boil down to promises, which, in addition to being limp, contain the reservation that their fulfilment depends on "how far this is made possible by circumstances" and on whether the consciousness of the masses "rises" to the level allowing the Social-Democratic leaders to carry out their promises. In the documents of many Social-Democratic parties mention is made of what is termed as the Social-Democratic strategy of small steps. It seems that the lines: "By slow step, cautious zigzag, in low gear, forward men of labour!" in a satirical verse of the close of the 19th century ridiculing the Economists in Russia have now found their way almost in toto into the resolutions of the congresses of the reformist parties, in which, on top of everything, it is accentuated that the "small steps" must be worked out in keeping with the actual situation. The Austrian Communists* regard the "social partnership" system in their country as a classical example of the method of bourgeois administration described by Lenin as a "method of deception, flattery, fine phrases, promises by the million, petty sops, and concessions of the unessential while retaining the essential".**

The main motivation of the actions of the Right-wing leaders of many Socialist parties is to "soothe" the masses, to dilute the class struggle. They make no secret of the fact that they advocate reforms because renunciation of reforms would bring "growing tension and radicalisa-

* *World Marxist Review*, Vol. 17, October 1974, p. 36.

** V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 24, pp. 63-64.

tion". They even urge that shortcomings should not be obscured because protests against them could hinder social peace. If the Right-wing Social-Democrats press for more rights for the workers in industrial management they do so only in order to prevent an exacerbation of social conflicts.

By proclaiming that the class struggle belongs to the past century, that it does not chime in with the modern epoch, the Right-wing Social-Democrats seek to give their parties and the trade unions influenced by them the image of organisations adapted to class peace, to "social partnership". These are not organisations of struggle but rather of mediation. Since there is in fact no "social peace", the assertions that there must be such a peace involve in practice appeasement, concessions to the ruling classes and ideological conceptions "acceptable to everybody".

The "mechanism" by which the reformists extinguish justified social discontent is quite eloquently revealed in *Slippery Ice Here and There*, a novel by the West German author Max von der Grün. The workers of a transport agency accidentally find that the management had installed bugging devices everywhere under the guise of selector intercommunication. They manage to get hold of recordings of bugged conversations. Their spontaneous disgust threatens the agency with a public scandal. The evidence against it is a bomb capable of exploding the falsity of the democratic verbiage concealing the constant infringement upon the dignity and elementary rights of the working people. But there is no explosion. The managing director lauds the production council, saying that "it defuses conflicts and helps us to live side by side in a situation of production democracy, without fights". The novel describes how the trade union hushes up the scandal. The workers find that "even if we have the most powerful bomb, there will always be somebody to defuse it".*

* Max von der Grün, *Stellenweise Glatteis*, Berlin, 1974, p. 75.

To defuse the bombs of social protest is likewise an action, but it belongs in the category designed to prevent action by the masses.

The working people are constantly told by the opportunists that they can win self-management under capitalism, where the political and economic power is in the hands of the bourgeoisie, if they "reshape their psychology".

The revisionist Garaudy, a lover of fine words and hasty generalisations, instantly portrayed the pathetic reformist slogan of self-management at capitalist enterprises as the "latest contribution" to revolutionary theory. He extols the idea of self-management as a means of resolving all problems and writes of the Party: "The role of the vanguard lies not in leadership but in helping to give rise to initiative, in seeing and stimulating and coordinating initiative, in helping to understand and theoretically elaborate long-term demands and facilitating the appearance of self-management as a conscious project". Fearing that these "tasks" of the vanguard may be regarded as some sort of leadership, he adds: "This is a matter of pedagogics rather than of leadership." And, true to his weakness for pompous, empty verbiage, he concludes: "Self-management is the pedagogics of revolution and a revolution in pedagogics."*

It is thus suggested that acute issues of the political struggle should be resolved by pedagogical means, but the essence of pedagogics does not change even if it is proclaimed the "pedagogics of revolution" and the assurance is made that a "revolution in pedagogics" will take place through self-management.

One cannot help recalling what Lenin wrote about mixing politics with pedagogics in June 1905. The article in question criticised the Social-Democrats, who, in order to win more influence among the people, had counterposed educational, pedagogical work to the political struggle.

* Roger Garaudy, *L'alternative*, p. 244.

Lenin wrote that there was a boundary beyond which the unquestionable and immutable duties of the Party may lead to a narrowing of the tasks and scale of the movement, "into a doctrinaire blindness to the vital and cardinal political tasks of the moment".*

Lenin considered that in the Party's political work there was and would be a certain element of pedagogics: the entire class of wage workers had to be educated as fighters for the liberation of all mankind from oppression, that new strata of the proletariat had to be constantly educated, and the most undeveloped and backward elements of these strata had to be patiently raised to the level of communist consciousness. "The Social-Democrat who lost sight of this activity," Lenin wrote, "would cease to be a Social-Democrat. . . . But . . . a Social-Democrat who would reduce the tasks of politics to pedagogics would also, though for a different reason, cease to be a Social-Democrat."**

The Party can successfully conduct educational work only by bringing the masses into active participation in all political events and by formulating the tasks of the working-class struggle, in other words, by carrying out its vanguard role. The Communists do not single out whether to act or to educate. To do so would inevitably reduce pedagogics to a simple dissemination of knowledge, to abstract sermons and good intentions. The "pedagogics" of Garaudy is directed against the Party's vanguard role and is merely one of the current manifestations of revisionism, which seeks to nullify the importance of the political Party of the working class and, consequently, of the political struggle.

It would be wrong to say that all the Right revisionists who became active in the international communist movement in the 1960s parrot the Social-Democratic assertion

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 8, p. 453.

** Ibid., p. 454.

that the mass struggle is today no longer an important factor. The tiny Right-revisionist groups that are out of touch with the masses and understand that they have no influence usually do not concern themselves with the problem of mass actions and with how the conception "action" must be understood under present-day conditions.

It is useless to look for questions linked with the practice of the mass struggle in the revisionist scribbles of Fischer or in the journal *Wiener Tagebuch*, published by his followers. They prefer to keep within the range of pure ideas, declare that politics are a "distortion of ideas for the sake of translating them into practice", or put forward a dilemma such as: what is better—the "unsullied conscience of a critical spirit" or the "stained hand of political practice"? But the virulence of the revisionists towards the principles underlying the structure and practical work of the Marxist-Leninist parties and the orientation on "man's humanisation and self-assertion" as the highest criterion of truth leaves no doubt about the purpose of all these scribbles. Modern revisionism is nothing more than a variety of the orientation on capitalism's self-transformation. It "obviates" the need for a mass struggle and reduces all the intricate problems involved in the building of the new society to non-committal talk about the perfection and liberation of the individual.

2. THE ACTIONS WANTED BY PSEUDO-LEFTISM

The reformist aspiration to do without resolute action of any kind is contrasted, as it were, by the "unbridled" actions of pseudo-Leftism, which proclaims its preparedness to act always, everywhere and in the most determined fashion. Whatever the guise of the present-day ultra-revolutionary, he invariably preaches "direct actions". He argues that a party is revolutionary only when it pursues a policy of "direct actions". Although the "ultra-revolution-

aries" may see diversity in these "direct actions", they in fact follow one and the same pattern, being variants of the anarchist assertion that "every rising is useful".

The journal *Buntar*, published by the Russian anarchists at the turn of the century, wrote: "Our purpose is to develop and deepen the spirit of rebellion and destruction. . . . Our tactics are to *fight* all laws by *illegal* means."^{*} The spread of the mass struggle increasingly exposed anarchism's pseudo-revolutionary character. Was it accidental that not a single anarchist fighting group took part in the armed uprising of December 1905 in Moscow?

After the revolution of February 1917 in Russia one of the most widespread anarchist trends, which called itself pananarchism, began urging the immediate realisation of the slogan "to each according to his needs" and urged "plunging everything into anarchy": "Chain-gangs, thieves, murderers, prostitutes! Sons of darkness, become knights of brightness. . . . Plunge everything into anarchy!" As soon as the October Revolution was accomplished the anarchists called for a "third revolution", for the overthrow of the Soviet power and the abolition of the state generally.

As early as January 1918 *Burevestnik*, mouthpiece of the anarchists, had to admit that every word it wrote against the Bolsheviks was "accepted with a roar of malicious joy by the gutter Black Hundred press, which courteously, in a transport of joy, printed excerpts from our articles in bold face type on its front pages". But this did not stop the anarchists.

During the Civil War they proclaimed Makhno a "great anarchist", a "second Bakunin", and his banditry was described as "the beginning of the great third revolution". When a counter-revolutionary rising broke out in Kron-

^{*} B. I. Gorev, *Anarchists, Maximalists and Makhayevites. Anarchist Trends During the First Russian Revolution*, Petrograd, 1918, p. 41 (in Russian).

stadt in March 1921 they wrote: "The first stone of the third revolution has been laid here, in Kronstadt." Participation in the kulak risings in Siberia and all sorts of "anarchist experiments", which quickly turned into unalloyed crime, helped the interventionists and the white-guards. Anarchist pseudo-revolutionariness evolved into a variety of counter-revolution and led to the total collapse of anarchism in Russia.

Anarchist "direct actions" always reject mass organised actions and aspire to replace the mass struggle. The experience of Russia provides evidence that during acute class collisions of the working masses with the bourgeoisie every attempt to act outside this struggle is doomed to failure. The logic of the class struggle either brings misled individuals to the ranks of the fighting working people or turns anarchists into direct accomplices of the reactionaries.

The history of anarchism in Russia is, in this respect, instructive but it is not exceptional. This is borne out by countless instances from the practice of anarchism in other countries. But the present-day Leftists blindly, with the air of discoverers, follow the same crooked roads passed by their predecessors.

The following words are from some of the placards displayed by anarchists in West Germany: "There is creative joy in the passion of destruction!", "Hit any man over thirty you meet in the street in the face—you will make no mistake!"*

Formerly, a favourite maxim of the anarchists was that every man had an angel on one shoulder and a devil on the other. The former pacifies, induces a person to be docile and obedient. The latter excites him, urges him to disobey authority and calls for insubordination. Today the anarchists do not speak of angels and devils. They appeal, as they did in the past, not to the mind but to feelings, count-

* Horst Bienek, *Bakunin, eine Invention*, Munich, 1970, p. 15.

ing on an eruption of instincts pushing people into action "regardless of conditions" and the situation.

Anarchism exists outside space and time, as it were. What the anarchists urge today might have resounded in the same words 50 or 70 years ago. However, the anarchist slogans of a day long past are copied by the present-day proponents of violence and destruction. In the 1960s reanimated anarchism went so far as to proclaim Makhno one of its "ideologists" and the notorious slogan "Anarchy is the mother of order".

The anarchists do not conceal their scorn for any form of struggle aimed at improving the living standard of the working people and obtaining the satisfaction of democratic demands. They argue that "nothing can be won by such trivialities". They have always regarded the struggle for reforms as beneath their "ultra-revolutionary" dignity.

The same picture is to be observed today. The journal *Anarchy*, published in Britain, contended that there was no need for reforms or for a parliamentary struggle. "When they are elected to parliament, those very workers who are now staunch democrats and Socialists, will become determined aristocrats, bold or timid worshippers of the principles of authority, and will also become oppressors and exploiters."*

The anarchists reject all forms of the class struggle, which is developing and gaining experience, and offer instead nothing except terror, allowing, it is true, for different variations on the principle that the more a "direct action" is extravagant the more revolutionary it becomes.

They have recourse to terror under all conditions without stopping to think of the aim of any act of terrorism. It is not enough to say that such acts are barren. They are harmful and, essentially speaking, play into the hands of the reactionaries.

The inhabitants of Hamburg who passed by the build-

* *Anarchy*, June 1961, p. 119.

ing housing the offices of the concern run by the obscurantist Springer looked in vain for the damage done by a terrorist bomb in May 1972. The blast did not stop production for a minute. But that act caused the FRG authorities to demand "closer attention to suspicious persons, suspicious actions and suspicious houses".* This situation allowed the reactionaries to make the Bundestag promulgate yet another law limiting democratic freedoms and giving more powers to the police.

Shortly before this, the Communists of the FRG wrote in connection with the actions of the terrorists that they "are making it possible to delude public opinion, intensify demagogic slander and hostility for Socialists and Communists and thereby isolate the progressive forces".**

In November 1974 the underground anarchist RAF (Red Army Faction), which proclaimed itself the "revolutionary vanguard" in the FRG, made an attempt on the life of the chairman of a judicial chamber and threatened to take further action against judges and the police. The group declared that it had to mount attacks in order to awaken revolutionary consciousness. Its programme stated: "The bombs we hurl at the machinery of oppression explode, at the same time, in the consciousness of the masses".***

The assassination attempt of the "ultra-revolutionaries" was the signal for another anti-communist campaign. The double-dyed reactionaries grouped around Strauss and Springer repeated their demand for a ban on the German Communist Party and the adoption of anti-democratic laws. In February 1975 an anarchist group, formed under RAF influence, kidnapped Peter Lorenz, Chairman of the CDU of West Berlin. On the pretext of "establishing order and restoring law" the reactionaries fanned mass hysteria. The scenario for a "political hit" is thus almost standard:

* *Die Welt*, June 3, 1972.

** *Unsere Zeit*, May 26, 1972.

*** *Die Welt*, May 23, 1972.

the "ultra-Leftists" begin, the ultra-Rights continue, and further persecution is initiated against the forces of democracy.

Analogous consequences, though on a different scale, result from the "direct actions" of the anarchists in other countries. The French Communists have noted that Leftist actions have been used by the authorities to reinforce the repressive apparatus.

Everywhere, after giving wide press, radio and television publicity to terrorist actions, the authorities launch vociferous campaigns against "communist conspiracies", intimidating, slandering and endeavouring to win popular support for reaction.*

The ruling bourgeoisie had long ago found that terrorist groups were useful to it. According to the bourgeois press, at least 10 per cent of the membership of the French "ultra-Left" groups are police agents.

The authorities not only find the "direct actions" of the anarchists useful but value them because they prevent a real swing to the Left, a real revolutionisation of the masses, engender a mood of passive waiting for "deliverance from without", and dim the class consciousness. The futility of these "direct actions" gives rise to despondency and creates the false impression that it is hopeless to fight oppressors.

The class struggle is not a single-handed fight of groups of daredevils against individual representatives or clusters of capitalist society. Here it would be appropriate to recall Lenin's words that the "shell" in which imperialism has enclosed society "unfortunately is made of the best steel, and hence cannot be broken by the efforts of *any* ... chicken".**

* Reminding its readers that Ulrike Meinhof who was involved in a terrorist act had started out as a member of the peace movement, the West German newspaper *Die Welt* on June 19, 1972 warned people against taking a "slippery path".

** V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 27, p. 340.

The anarchists, those apostles of individualism, extol the struggle of individuals and tiny groups. They do not believe in the efficacy of mass actions and, essentially, reject such actions. But among the Leftists there are some who are not averse to speaking of the role of the masses in history. However, in their views about the character of the revolutionary struggle they have not moved far from the anarchist notions about "direct actions". Such are the Trotskyists. As distinct from the anarchists, they do not deny the role of the Party, but they recognise as revolutionary only that Party which sees the fundamental and sole sense of its existence in organising open armed clashes.

Today the Trotskyists declare that the "day of propaganda has passed", that "it is time to put an end to the fetish of propaganda". They urge "immediate action" and, in effect, preach what are called the tactics of "revolutionary gymnastics". In the mid-1960s the Latin American Trotskyists, for instance, made a principle of such "direct actions" as at all costs staging armed peasant actions one after another, otherwise, they argued, it would be impossible to ensure the "permanent mobilisation of the masses" and "open new fronts".

In the same way as some years earlier the "Fourth International" had demanded scattered peasant actions, it has today begun to urge separate "youth rebellions". By slogans such as "turn every university into a fortress of the revolution", by their provocations and by their instigation of acts of semi-hooliganism by some young people they led the revolutionary aspirations of young people into an impasse and prevented the consolidation of the anti-imperialist forces.

All this "activity" is evidence of helplessness, of loss of faith in ability to wage a real political struggle. Henri Weber, a Trotskyist leader in France, involuntarily admitted that "when there are no political means of struggle it is necessary to resort to a policy of means".* Perhaps

* *Les nouvelles études marxistes* No. 2, 1969, p. 44.

he did not even realise how far he had exposed himself. Had he been consistent, in the phrase "it is necessary to resort to a policy of means" he would have used the words "we will have to" instead of "it is necessary to". The "policy of means" is a forced policy of at least somehow justifying one's existence in one's own eyes. It is nothing else than a striving to do without the masses, i.e., the only force capable of creating real political means of struggle.

The absolute majority of the Trotskyist groups calls themselves "associations", "leagues", "alliances" and so forth, and only a few style themselves as "parties" although they are no more than small sects. But while remaining sects, the Trotskyists love to argue what "parties of action", "parties of the armed rising" should be like. They contend that such parties are as yet non-existent but promise that they will appear in the event the Trotskyist groups, that are fighting the communist movement, grow larger and stronger.

While marking time, they try to attract supporters with promises of an impending revolutionary "X-day", when everything will be resolved by a short blow. The British Trotskyists make their appeal to 15-16-year-olds with the argument that the "revolution is round the corner". Actually these are the same "revolutionary gymnastics" we have already mentioned; more frequently simply "revolutionary idleness", a passive waiting for the coming notorious "X-day", while, on the other hand, an active day-to-day struggle is waged against the Communists.

Leftist groups of all orientations believe that actions are most "revolutionising" when they provoke, shock, create unexpected situations and stun. A Dutch anarchist group has called itself Provo, from the word "provoke". "A role for the revolutionary today is to be provocateur."* When this "injunction" was translated into the language

* Jerry Rubin, *We Are Everywhere*, New York, 1971, p. 234.

of practical action it acquired the following context in a statement made by a US anarchist group: "We'll burn. But we'll burn the streets first. We'll be hit but we'll hit the cops first.... It will be bloody but blood makes the liberals mad. And we've got to make them mad."*

In *What Is to Be Done?* Lenin showed that the tactics of inciting the masses by artificial means were senseless and harmful, writing: "It is difficult to imagine an argument that more thoroughly disproves itself. Are there not enough outrages committed in ... life without special 'excitants' having to be invented? On the other hand, is it not obvious that those who are not, and cannot be, roused to excitement even by Russian tyranny will stand by 'twiddling their thumbs' and watch a handful of terrorists engaged in single combat with the government?"**

Every name imaginable is given to the tactics of artificially inciting the masses by provocations. In our day of scientific and technological progress the Leftists have taken a special liking for the word "detonator". A clear statement on this score was made by Gian Carlo Pajetta, member of the Political Bureau of the Italian Communist Party at that Party's 13th Congress: "We categorically condemn the so-called detonator doctrine, which is designed to justify the 'group' capable of kindling a spark, the group which presumptuously assumes the role of 'exploding' the situation, in the framework of which the masses are portrayed as unthinking ... or having succumbed to what is described as our spurious reformism."***

The Communists unmask the reformist aspiration to prevent mass actions, and also the Leftist claims to replace such actions with outbursts of anger. They have a clear

* Christopher Lasch, *The Agony of the American Left*, p. 183.

** V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 5, p. 420.

*** XIII Congresso del Partito comunista italiano. *Atti e risoluzioni*, p. 229.

idea of true revolutionary action. This idea stems from the Marxist-Leninist teaching on the role played by the masses and the working class in the historical process.

3. THE COMMUNIST PARTY—THE GENUINE PARTY OF ACTION

The ideology of the communist movement is permeated with a militant spirit of transformation and serves as the day-to-day guide to action.

Whatever character is acquired by the activity of the Marxist-Leninist Party and whatever form of struggle is given prominence in the obtaining situation, the basic line pursued by the Party is to draw the largest possible number of workers and other working people into energetic action in keeping with the situation. Struggle deepens the consciousness of the masses and gives them political experience.

The Paraguayan Communist Party, which functions deep underground, considers, and this is stated in the Political Theses adopted at its Third Congress in 1971, that any form of mass struggle that furthers the organisation and unity of the masses, promotes their demands and political education, helps to isolate the enemy, gather strength and build up the revolutionary movement may be regarded as revolutionary. But when the hour of decision strikes none but the most effective forms of struggle for working-class and popular power are revolutionary.*

The Communists feel themselves in duty bound to master all forms of struggle. They denounce the Leftist scorn for day-to-day, sometimes unnoticeable work of spreading revolutionary views and championing the vital needs of the working people. Similarly, they stigmatise opportunist timidity in face of acute class clashes. While

* *World Marxist Review*, April 1974, p. 26.

recognising as justified the diverse forms of struggle if only they are not artificial but conform to concrete historical conditions, the Marxist-Leninist parties strive to make use of every form to promote mass action and deepen the revolutionary process.

The role of vanguard means to be in the lead, to illumine and pioneer the road to the future, to fight staunchly and draw ever larger numbers of people into the struggle. Lenin always ironically regarded the claimants to the role of vanguard who did not reinforce their claims with vigorous action. In *What Is to Be Done?* he wrote: "...It is not enough to call ourselves the 'vanguard', the advanced contingent; we must act in such a way that *all* the other contingents recognise and are obliged to admit that we are marching in the vanguard."* It was his view that in the Russia of those days the role of vanguard could only be played by a Party that could organise a nation-wide exposure of the autocracy. Within a few years the situation changed to such an extent that the vanguard of the revolutionary forces could only be a Party that was capable of organising a nation-wide armed uprising. At the different phases of the revolutionary struggle Lenin time and again dealt with the conception of "vanguard" and in each case he underscored the importance of organising the masses.

The Communist parties of the capitalist countries today operate under the most diverse conditions, and their possibilities for organising the masses are dissimilar. But the striving to organise the mass struggle predetermines the character of their activity, of their concrete actions. This approach fundamentally distinguishes the actions of the Marxist-Leninist parties from the actions of any other organisations laying claim to be regarded revolutionary, especially from the actions of the parties desiring to preserve the existing system.

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 5, p. 426.

What political party does not engage in popularising its ideas, in mass agitation? But in the case of the Communist parties their propaganda is aimed at fostering the political consciousness of the masses as an indispensable condition of conscious and organised action. For that reason the Communist parties regard their propaganda as being closely linked with action, as an inalienable element of their work.

In the early 1960s some French Communists declared that propaganda and action were antipodal, that if the accent were placed on action there was hardly any need for propaganda. In the Central Committee report presented by Waldeck Rochet to the 16th Congress of the French Communist Party in 1961 it was stated: "We must reject every tendency to underrate the role of propaganda with references to, for instance, the fact that our Party is a Party of action. . . .

"It is true that our Party is a Party of action and the working people acquire the necessary experience mainly in struggle, but it should not be forgotten that the propaganda of ideas prepares and explains action."*

The Communists do not divorce action from their tireless work of explaining all the phenomena worrying the masses. In addressing, as the French Communists say, "each and everyone" the Party uses all methods—from individual talks to discussions and debates attended by thousands of people. In addition to circulating its press from door to door, the FCP annually organises the grandiose *L'Humanité* festivals, which are major events of the nation's cultural and political life. The leaflets distributed at the gates of enterprises, the factory newspapers, the Marxist Book Weeks, and the massive sales of the most important Party publications show the

* *Parti Communiste Français. XVI^e Congrès, Saint-Denis, 11-14 mai 1961*, p. 80.

energy, initiative and resourcefulness of tens of thousands of Communists, and the purpose of all this is to promote the activity and consciousness of the masses and sustain their readiness to fight for their interests, against big capital.

Forms of work consistent with the situation, with the changing conditions are extremely important for the success of communist activity among the people. While making wide use of all the methods of educational work that had justified themselves in the past, the French Communists attach special significance to methods that mirror the changes wrought by the new mass media, especially radio and television.

In June 1971 the Central Committee of the FCP devoted a plenary meeting to the problem of the ideological struggle and the Party's propaganda activity. It was noted that radio and television had somewhat diminished the importance of traditional rallies by bringing the word into people's homes. At the same time, this had given rise to a new requirement—the requirement for discussion, and this was making open meetings more effective. In the opinion of the French Communists discussions have become an important factor of political life. They provide larger possibilities for explaining the Party's policy, help to tie in general questions with the day-to-day cares and requirements of the people and are a factor democratising political life.

The French Communist Party has extensive experience of arranging discussions at different levels, from mass rallies on the scale of towns, at which the speakers are leaders of the Party, to discussions sponsored by primary organisations. The practice of these rallies proved to be so successful that the 20th Congress of the FCP (1972) introduced an addendum to the Party Rules making it binding upon primary organisations to popularise the Party's policy, ideals and decisions, in addition to circulating the Party press and literature, regularly

publishing cell newspapers and leaflets, by "organising public meetings and discussions".*

In many documents of the FCP and other Communist parties it is stressed that Party propaganda must be more strongly argued and, at the same time, more understandable, diversified, operational and better adapted in content and form to the character of our times.

The striving to keep pace with the times is sometimes offered as grounds for the abandonment of certain tested ways of exercising political influence, some of which are among the most attractive and accessible to the people. The Italian Communist Renato Guttuso, who is a noted artist, says: "I can't understand why some people believe that the political poster has lost its value and significance. We are living in an age when the mass media influence people always and everywhere, at home, in the street, at work, in their free time. In this battle for people's minds and hearts we cannot afford to ignore so powerful a weapon as the political poster. To say that it has no place in the world of today is not only politically wrong judgment, but wrong judgment of man's way of life."**

The Communist parties strive to improve their means of exercising political influence, including such means as placards with short, stirring, eye-catching captions, in a form distinguishing them from the placards of other organisations and with a content that remains topical for a longer period.

Class consciousness does not take shape spontaneously. It must be promoted by the Communist Party, which regards its work of winning greater influence among the

* 20^e Congrès du Parti Communiste Français. Saint-Ouen, 13-17 Decembre, 1972. Rapports, Interventions et Documents, Salutations et Messages, p. 451.

** *World Marxist Review*, February 1973, p. 34.

people as permanent and mandatory under all conditions and circumstances. The Panamanian Communists note with gratification that despite the enormous difficulties and persecutions and despite the fact that their calls did not always find a response among the masses "Communists did not panic or become embittered, they continued to work patiently among different population groups. We did not, as the saying goes, lose sight of the wood for the trees".* The People's Party of Panama has strong and expanding links with the workers, peasants and students.

Class consciousness must be promoted both when the mass movement is on the upswing and during periods of decline and stagnation. Lenin wrote: "When there exist objective conditions which retard the growth of the political consciousness and class independence of the proletarian masses, one must be able patiently and steadfastly to work hand in hand with them, making no concessions in principles but not refraining from activity *right in the midst* of the proletarian masses."**

Underlying this work is Lenin's principle of educating the masses on the basis of their own political experience. Ib Nørlund, a leader of the Communist Party of Denmark, declared: "If there is the conviction that one's social views are correct and just, there are no grounds for fearing the conclusions that may be drawn by the masses on the basis of their own experience acquired in the process of the struggle for their interests, or how they in fact decide what forces are for and against them. On the contrary, this is a desirable development and it must be encouraged. This determines, in particular, the attitude of the Communists to active democratic movements despite the fact that the aims of these movements may be quite limited. If such movements develop, they will in

* *World Marxist Review*, March 1973, p. 20.

** V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 15, pp. 236-37.

time be faced with the need for choosing the further road forward."*

These are the guidelines of the Communists working in all mass organisations, chiefly in the trade unions. The Rules of the Communist parties usually contain a provision obligating members to join trade unions and set the example for all trade union members in the struggle for the aims of these organisations and to abide by and champion their inner democracy.

Today the trade unions represent a huge social force. Their purpose is, above all, to safeguard the economic interests of their members, but by the logic of the class struggle they find it increasingly impossible to confine themselves to these aims. They put forward broad social programmes, and in some countries the large trade unions declare that they are working for socialist aims.

It may be asked whether this does not give rise to the duplication or replacement of the trade unions by the Party? There is such a danger, of course. And the problem of how to avert it is likewise linked with what the Communist Party must be like today. Some Communists feel that the Party should not engage in the economic struggle of the working people. Their argument is that the economic struggle is the business of the trade union, and that the Party should concentrate on the political struggle, in other words, on election campaigns and parliamentary activity, that it should act on the key questions of the given country's internal and foreign policies. Arguments of this sort contain some elements of Right-opportunist views about the purpose of the Party. Besides the threat of isolation from the masses, underestimation of the Party's influence on the economic struggle may signify the Party's renunciation of its leading role, a role that it can play provided it goes into all spheres

* Ib Nørlund, *Det Kommunistiske Synspunkt*, Copenhagen, 1968.

of social life, when its presence is felt everywhere, and its attitude and organisational work help to extend the struggle and give a deeper understanding of its purpose.

The French Communist Party insists that its primary organisations at factories should not duplicate the trade unions. At the same time, it makes sure that the factory Party organisations do not turn away from the economic struggle but conduct it in a manner proper for a revolutionary political organisation, whose purpose is not only to achieve direct results improving the condition of the workers but to mould their revolutionary consciousness. The struggle for higher wages is only the first step in the shaping of class consciousness. The growing requirements of the working class inevitably widen the framework of the struggle to include working conditions, the rights of a worker at the factory, guaranteed employment and respect for the dignity of the workman. Economic problems are not isolated from politics. The Belgian Communists see considerable prospects in the fact that the rising prices are everywhere evoking a protective reflex and that this reflex frequently rises to the level of political resistance. The Party considers that it is its task to turn instinctive actions into conscious actions.

It can hardly be regarded as accidental that a strike to boycott the shipment of military equipment for the Chilean junta was declared in 1974 precisely by the Clyde shipyard workers, who upheld their right to work in an extremely difficult struggle. They refused to make the weapons that would be used against their fellow workers in Chile.

Wherever the Communists work they help the workers acquire more experience in the conduct of an organised class struggle, broaden their world outlook and understand the link between what takes place at their factory and what takes place in the country and the world at large, and see the essence of the exploiting system.

"With or Instead of the Workers?" is the heading of a letter from a reader published in *France Nouvelle* in its issue of October 16-22, 1973. The reader questioned the following passage in an article carried by the journal: "Workers do not need the Communists to decide what demands they and their trade unions should make and what forms of struggle to choose." He regarded this as an effort somehow to separate the Communists from the other workers. In its reply the journal wrote that it agreed with this reader if the latter believed that Communists should not replace the trade unions and impose their own decisions. It was the mission of the Communists to lead the struggle, to act with all the workers, to refrain from telling the workers to do this or that and nothing else, and to be the best, most active and most consistent in the class struggle.

Inasmuch as this is precisely how the Communists strive to act, the workers elect them as their representatives and shop stewards. As a result, even numerically small Communist parties steadily win stronger positions in the trade unions. At the Hamburg Congress of the German Communist Party (1973) it was noted that "nearly 85 per cent of the members of our Party belong to trade unions. As is proper for Communists, they are good trade union members and actively champion the class interests of their fellow workers".*

The workers regard the Communists as energetic and staunch comrades unfailingly fighting for the common cause. The fact that such people, people of action, are promoted in the trade unions is making itself increasingly felt, particularly with the aggravation of the class struggle. The growing role played by the lower links in the trade unions and the tendency to elect Communists to more responsible positions in the trade unions were noted

* Hamburg Congress of the German Communist Party, November 2-4, 1973, Moscow, 1975, pp. 51-52 (Russian translation).

in a resolution passed at the 33rd Congress of the Communist Party of Great Britain (November 1973). Having in mind the work among the trade union rank and file and the Communists who distinguished themselves in this work, the resolution stated: "It was the activity at this level which played a major part in bringing about the present high degree of struggle, and led, in its turn, to Left victories in the policy and leadership of a number of unions."*

The bourgeois press raised a cry, saying that the Communists were seizing the trade unions and that this was almost the reason for the fall of the Conservative Government in 1974. This was, of course, an exaggeration by the frightened bourgeois journalists. What they call "communist intrigues" is in fact a swing to the Left by the worker masses and growing activity by the working people, to whose struggle the Communists, naturally, contribute.

The principle by which the Communist parties are guided—to be always with the masses, to rely on the masses, to organise them and foster their activity day by day—highlights all aspects of Party activity, including its work in parliament and the municipal councils, and in mass campaigns, including election campaigns.

Every political party appeals to its electors. But the election campaigns organised by the Communists differ fundamentally from the campaigns conducted by the bourgeois parties. In the spring of 1974, when the bourgeois press of Italy charged that the scale of the ICP's mass campaign was evidence that the Party had financial sources which it was keeping secret, the Communists replied very simply: Our adversaries do not believe our budget because it is not profitable for them to do so. It

* *Comment* No. 24-25, December 1-15, 1973, p. 394.

costs the Italian Liberal Party enormous sums of money to organise rallies during the election campaign because it has to pay for everything: the people who paste posters, those who install microphones, those who drive about in cars to announce the name of the speaker, and so on. We do not have such expenditures, because ours is a mass Party with hundreds of thousands of activists, who to a larger or lesser extent voluntarily devote part of their free time to Party work.

When the Communists plan their election programmes they consult with the masses and constantly work among them. These programmes are not a set of promises, on which the tactics of bourgeois and reformist parties are usually based, but are a multiplicity of tasks interlocked into an integral whole for which the Communists intend to fight in and outside parliament.

The entire parliamentary work of the Communists is permeated with the striving to involve the largest number of working people in action, in the struggle. The draft laws submitted by the Communists are, as a rule, discussed in advance in trade unions and with representatives of different strata of the working people. In support of their proposals the Communist parties organise mass campaigns, which the parties predominant in parliament have to take into account.

At the elections to the Danish Folketing in December 1973 the Communist Party polled 111,000 votes and won its first seats in parliament since 1960. The Communists immediately introduced something new and unusual into the country's routine parliamentary life. Interviewed by the newspaper *Land og Folk* on December 30, 1973, Knud Jespersen, Chairman of the Communist Party of Denmark, said: "We serve the working class and are at its disposal. But the workers must show initiative themselves in order to compel the Social-Democrats and the People's Socialists to reconsider their policy.... The deputation that recently called on us on behalf of 100,000

working people eloquently demonstrated how policy must be conducted by new means."

The Danish Communists submit constructive proposals, for instance, on issues linked with the energy crisis, but they do not conceal the fact that for them the basic task is work among the masses. As a result of its actions the newly elected Communist group in the Folketing is now regarded by many trade unions as their representative. Influenced by the example set by the Communist group of deputies, the other parties no longer risk, as they used to do, to reject out of hand the demands of their electors. In May 1974 the speeches of the Communist deputies against the anti-labour programme of "stabilising the economy" precipitated action by tens and hundreds of thousands of working people. This confirmed the efficacy of the Communist Party's strategy of combining parliamentary and extra-parliamentary forms of struggle.*

In the course of many years Communists have been elected to leading posts in hundreds and thousands of municipal councils in France, Italy and some other countries. People think highly of them as efficient, uncorruptible, principled and energetic administrators. But whatever their day-to-day work as mayors and municipal counsellors, the Communists never forget that people voted for them as representatives of the Party of the working class, of the Party of action. They strive to turn the municipal council into a centre of social life of the entire district, form close links with mass organisations and enlist many people into the work of satisfying the requirements of the population. The Red Emilia in Italy, the Red Belt in Paris and the State of Kerala in India are regions where the working people are not only electors but direct participants in many areas of social work and, when necessary, come forward as a united

* *World Marxist Review*, October 1974, p. 28.

political force that has to be reckoned with by the government authorities.

As parties of action, the Communist parties are organisations that constantly display initiative not only in political matters but also in the most diverse areas of social life. There is not a single issue worrying the working people on which the Communists can say: This does not concern us. The Communist parties go into all affairs allowed by their strength, even those that to a "revolutionary snob" may seem petty and unworthy of a revolutionary. Here the Communists combat environmental pollution, there they press for the building of schools, and elsewhere they demand doctors for rural areas. Party organisations arrange the recreation and cultural activities of the working people.

In Austria and the FRG the Communist parties actively support the civic initiative committees. These are initiatives by the population of individual districts, neighbourhoods and streets on various issues (housing, transport, schools, child care, noise and so on). The Communists regard these initiatives as part of the democratic movement. They feel that the participants in this movement are not always aware that the matter concerns problems arising out of the system. Some people are inclined to attribute them to miscalculations, abuses and mistakes. But this is precisely where it is the task of the Communists to explain that at bottom these are not blunders but social phenomena.*

In Canada the Communists initiate and organise mass campaigns more and more frequently. Massive campaigns were conducted in 1974 to fight the energy crisis and the inflation. One form of these campaigns is the dispatch of delegations to parliament, government institutions in the provinces and municipal authorities. The people are informed of the demands presented by the delegations

* *Weg und Ziel*, June 1973, p. 215.

and of the replies received by them from the authorities. Open meetings are held throughout the country, placards are posted and literature is disseminated in which the Party's stand on vital issues is stated. In noting the impact of the mass campaigns on the thinking of working people, William Kashtan, General Secretary of the Communist Party of Canada, wrote: "The mass campaigns of our Party help to bring political and socialist consciousness into the working-class movement and mass organisations of the workers."^{*}

The Italian Communists consider that a mass Party should not be solely a political headquarters. While enhancing its role as the vanguard force of all mass movements, they say, the Party must operate directly in the most diverse areas. In the countryside the Communists work to give effect to steps that would help to bring neglected land under cultivation, preserve the labour force and animate democratic organisations; they are the first to fight the consequences of natural calamities, show concern for the development of schools and for the regulation of land rent.

In many towns the Party sections strive to make their premises not only centres of propaganda but also a kind of club. They organise medical and legal services for the working people and recreation for the children of workers.

The mass parties have adequate possibilities for preventing such actions from being reduced to simple cultural services, for merging them and using them as a vehicle for enhancing their prestige and enabling them to carry out their role of political vanguard more effectively.

The ability of the Communist parties to stir the people to action has been shown time and again in mass demonstrations, nation-wide strikes and political cam-

^{*} *World Marxist Review*, April 1974, p. 13.

paigns that cut short the attempts of the reactionaries to limit democracy and unleash provocations and acts of violence.

The Portuguese Communist Party showed that it was a skilled organiser of the mass struggle virtually as soon as it emerged from underground. In the difficult situation in which Portugal had to be democratised and the sinister legacy left by the fascists had to be overcome, the Communist Party's organisational work influenced developments to a large extent.

Internal and international reaction, Alvaro Cunhal, General Secretary of the Portuguese Communist Party, said at the 25th Congress of the CPSU, were mounting particularly savage attacks against the Portuguese Communist Party, alleging that it was upheld by a revolutionary minority. "That is not true, of course," he said. "We are not Blanquists, we are not conspirators. We act on the laws of scientific socialism and strive to show the people that our views and attitudes are correct."^{*}

The Portuguese revolution has made considerable headway, winning significant victories, but the Communists do not by any means regard these victories as final. They see difficulties in the coming struggles and warn against excessive self-confidence and also against any lack of confidence in being able to surmount all the difficulties on the road of democratic development. The Portuguese Communists have embarked on the road of working among the people, the road of vigorous action.

The French Communists note with satisfaction that the cells which had for decades been baited by the bourgeois press have now become a force that cannot be ignored. This term is now to be found in encyclopaedic dictionaries. "Millions of Frenchmen today appreciate the work of the thousands of cells and this mirrors the warm, live, human image of the Party. Even *Larousse* states in its

^{*} *Pravda*, February 27, 1976.

definition that a cell is a 'group of militant Communists formed mainly of workers at places of work and at places of residence'.**

We will leave the accuracy of this definition of an organisation which they recognised so belatedly to the compilers of that famous dictionary. The important thing is that the cells, which comprise the advanced echelon of an embattled Party, as they are called by the Communists, have won an important place in national life, that they operate and that the scale of their actions is broadening.

In the resolution adopted by the 21st Extraordinary Congress of the French Communist Party it is stated that the growing complexity of economic and social life and the intensity of the political struggle require an "activation of the work of each cell, of every Communist". The Congress called upon all the cells to discharge with honour their duty as the lower link of the mass Party, which was playing a vanguard role. The Rules of the FCP list the basic duties of the cells. But not even the most detailed listing of duties can envisage everything that the Communists encounter in the course of the class struggle. At the 15th Congress of the FCP in 1959 it was stated that "everything which mirrors the intervention of the masses is action".**

The reformist "struggle" for reforms corrupts the class consciousness of the workers and, properly speaking, pursues the aim of reconciling the working class with the capitalist system while achieving a certain improvement of the condition of the working people. The Communists consider that a struggle for reforms is justified when it fosters the class consciousness of the working people and makes them see for themselves that capitalism cannot be touched up by individual reforms, that it is not susceptible

* *Cahiers du communisme*, June 1974, p. 94.

** *Cahiers du communisme*, July-August 1959, pp. 543-44.

to treatment and can be changed only through its destruction. No reforms can remove the basic issue of the character of power, in other words, the question of revolution. The Marxist-Leninist vanguard is guided by Lenin's proposition that struggle must be conducted "only for such improvement of the workers' conditions as will raise their capacity to wage the class struggle, i.e., when the improvement of conditions is *not bound up* with corruption of political consciousness".*

Hence the special significance of advanced slogans in organising the actions of the masses and in promoting their class consciousness. The Party's slogan is a battle cry: a concise expression of the demands and aims put forward by the vanguard and for which it calls upon the masses to fight; not only aims but the ways of attaining them. A slogan, Lenin said, was a "clear aim and a clear-cut road".**

In effect, the Party's vanguard role begins with the ability to articulate what the masses think. The ability to see what holds the minds of different strata of the people and to help them define and substantiate their demands and find the best forms of struggle for these aims constitute the prime duty of the revolutionary vanguard. Life is complex and many-faceted, and it raises a host of questions; and it is not easy at all to find the central, decisive question, that keynote that defines everything else, and to put it in few words for the people.

Theoretical analyses of the epoch that enable the Party to take its bearings in a wide spectrum of developments and the Party's Marxist-Leninist Programme help to find correct solutions to specific issues. It was Lenin's view that a "slogan of the *immediately* impending struggle cannot be deduced simply and directly from the *general* slogan of a certain programme".*** For this the

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 6, p. 169.

** V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 11, p. 404 (in Russian).

*** V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 11, p. 116.

actual historical situation must be taken into consideration. There must be a lucid idea of the mood of the masses, of their preparedness to support one slogan of struggle or another.

Social science has many methods of studying public opinion, the mood and views of the population as a whole and of various of its strata. But given all their significance, these methods should not be overrated, much less used as the foundation of conclusions about the preparedness of the masses to support the demands put forward by the Party. A comparison of the data of sociological studies conducted on the eve of major class battles and the behaviour of the workers in the course of the battle itself show the relativity of this sort of research. There are countless facts to indicate that frequently, before a strike is proclaimed, only a small number of the workers come out actively in favour of the strike, much less believe in its success. But when a trade union declares a strike it is joined by practically all the workers.

The vote cannot serve as an exhaustive indication of the militant preparedness of the working people for a struggle. Lenin considered that even general elections cannot show the actual mood of the masses with any certainty, especially during the most dynamic periods of development. In the brilliant article "The Constituent Assembly Elections and the Dictatorship of the Proletariat", he showed how important it was to approach an analysis of general statistics from a class position. It would be a petty-bourgeois illusion, he wrote, to imagine that the "working people are capable, under capitalism, of acquiring the high degree of class consciousness, firmness of character, perception and wide political outlook that will enable them to decide, *merely by voting*, or at all events, to *decide in advance*, without long experience of struggle, that they will follow a particular class, or a particular party".* The results of the elections in France

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 30, p. 266.

in 1968-1969 demonstrated how quickly the mood of the masses can change, who in the course of a single year gave their support to the personal power regime of de Gaulle and then compelled him to resign.

The revolutionary vanguard never depends solely upon opinion polls and voting. Being closely linked with the masses, with different strata of the population, it acts in such a manner as constantly to feel the mood and aspirations of the masses. The political vanguard determines the preparedness of the masses for a struggle not on the basis of statistics but through its day-to-day work in the very thick of the masses, through work which does not give out the wish for reality and its own determination to struggle for the determination of the masses.

While attaching great importance to knowing the mood of the masses and to the Party being able to see the changes taking place in the mass mind, Lenin noted that it was as important to know what the people thought and felt for correctly defining the moment for an action, step and call as it was impermissible to chart tactics solely in accordance with the mood of the people. "To argue differently," he wrote, "would mean replacing sustained proletarian tactics by unprincipled dependence on 'mood'."*

In putting forward slogans and demands on the basis of a sober analysis of the situation, the Party takes as its point of departure the fact that "real support in a genuine struggle is given to those who strive for the maximum (achieving something less in the event of failure) and not to those who opportunistically curtail the aims of the struggle *before the fight*".**

A genuinely revolutionary slogan meeting with vital requirements and indicating the prospects is a most powerful instrument of revolutionary education; it inspires people with the desire to fight, gives the movement a

* Ibid., Vol. 12, p. 407.

** Ibid., Vol. 11, pp. 30-31.

purpose and helps to create an atmosphere of an upsurge of energy. The task of the Party is to devise "a slogan capable of arousing enthusiasm among the masses".*

The slogans of the Marxist-Leninist Party appeal to the mind and feeling of the masses. They are rational because they spring from the actual conditions of the struggle and from realistic possibilities and are not based on abstract ideas ready-made for all occasions in life. They are charged with emotion for they appeal to the finest feelings of the working people, to their faith in justice and in a bright future, to their hatred of the class enemy.

The slogans of opportunist, conciliatory parties and trends usually lack spirit and are permeated with the striving for adaptation to circumstances and not for changing them. Those who devise such slogans corrupt the class consciousness of the working people. They turn economic demands into a means of bargaining in the talks with the government or entrepreneurs, and use political demands to win votes and excite interest in major problems only for the duration of election campaigns.

Similar harm is inflicted by Leftist slogans that are proclaimed as incantations regardless of the conditions of struggle. The Leftists regard "slogans", not as a practical conclusion from a class analysis and assessment of a particular moment in history, but as a charm with which a party or a tendency has been provided once and for all".**

As a rule, the Leftists do not take the trouble to work out concrete demands, preferring florid verbiage calculated to produce an outward impression, deprived of a positive content and permeated solely with a denial of everything in sight. Slogans of this kind can only excite feeling, arouse transient interest but they fade as quickly as fireworks in a dark sky.

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 17, p. 283.

** Ibid., Vol. 15, p. 154.

Everything has its own logic. It is not surprising that supplanting of revolutionary slogans by empty yells is but one step to what resembles sooner buffoonery than a political struggle.

The Leftist newspaper *Il Manifesto*, for instance, emotionally wrote how its supporters chanted during a demonstration of working people in Rome at the end of 1973:

One, two, three—we'll nail Pinochet;
Four, five, six—and kill Frei as well;
Seven, eight, nine, ten—and bury the Greek colonels;
Count to a dozen—and do for Fanfani, too;
And by the time we count to a million—all the employers will
be launched into eternity.*

Yells of this sort can only arouse momentary curiosity, nothing more. They do not call upon the working people to do anything and do not frighten those whom they intend to "launch into eternity" "by the time they count to a million".

The "slogans" shouted for hours by the Trotskyist and anarchist groups in Paris on the eve of the presidential elections of 1974 had a different hue but essentially boiled down to the same thing: "Neither Giscard, nor Chaban nor Mitterrand!", "No to the joint programme!",** "There is only one decision—revolution!".

The true revolutionary vanguard contends that the Leninist assessment of the negative slogans put forward solely to "sharpen" the consciousness of the masses not only holds true in our day but even acquires greater significance as a warning, because today the working people have unprecedentedly larger possibilities for securing a positive settlement of many issues. "A 'negative' slogan unconnected with a definite positive solution will not 'sharpen'.

* *Il Manifesto*, December 14, 1973.

** Meaning the joint programme of the Communists and Socialists, to which the Left Radicals subscribed.

but dull consciousness, for such a slogan is a hollow phrase, mere shouting, meaningless declamation.”*

The Communist vanguard is careful to make its slogans effective, concrete, mobilising factors and thereby capable of carrying out an important educational role. The Communists regard as fundamentally impermissible the methods of the Leftists, who have recourse to “desperate”, tub-thumping slogans calculated to produce an outward effect, and they make sure that their own slogans, placards and transparencies are live, unforgettable and attractive by their profound content and vivid form.

The Communist parties insist that alongside the political slogans designed for the entire country and appealing to different strata of the working people, the local Party organisations, down to primary cells, should put forward their own slogans that mirror the specifics of the situation in which they operate and the requirements of the population among whom they work.

At the Düsseldorf Congress of the German Communist Party it was underscored that “it is important to remould the consciousness of the workers developing on the basis of their own experience of struggle at enterprises and in the course of the struggle for higher wages into political consciousness, into an understanding that class interests require the projection of the struggle beyond the enterprises and an extension of the influence of the working people in the economy, in the state and in society”.** It was noted at this congress that the Communists were still inadequately helping the working class to understand that its social condition depended on political development in order to bring it gradually not only to the economic but also to the political and ideological class struggle. Precisely in this lies the task of all Communists. “We must carry it

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 23, p. 71.

** *Protokoll des Düsseldorfer Parteitages der Deutschen Kommunistischen Partei. November 25-28, 1971, Hamburg, 1971, pp. 41-42.*

out in the Party groups at factories and at the place of residence, and when we appeal to workers in leaflets, or in our factory newspapers, at meetings, or in the course of militant actions.”**

Abstract truths and abstract theoretical propositions cannot enlist the workers to the side of socialism. On the other hand, by explaining to the working people the connection between their social condition and the economic and political system of power, the Communists widen the latter's world outlook and promote their consciousness. Even a numerically small Party can achieve major successes in developing the workers' class consciousness. At the 33rd National Congress of the Communist Party of Great Britain (November 1973) it was noted, “Through a steady stream of leaflets, pamphlets and folders, through thousands of public meetings and other forms of demonstrative activity, and through the involvement in the daily struggle of our branches in the localities, factories and colleges, and the leadership given by thousands of Communist militants, the Communist Party has helped to raise the level of mass struggle and give it socialist perspective.”*** The debates held across the country on burning social issues were indicative that “the working class is beginning to set its sights higher than for many years”.****

The Marxist-Leninist parties are working to turn instinctive into conscious feeling, develop class consciousness, help to convert it into action, into struggle, and initiative that can carry along all strata of the working people. The Party, Lenin wrote, must help the proletariat to rise to the active role of leader. In this lies the “basic difference in the tactics of the opportunist and the revolutionary tactics”.****

* Ibid., p. 124.

** *Comment No. 24-25, 1973, p. 395.*

*** Ibid., p. 394.

**** V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 12, p. 501.

A young automobile factory worker, who joined the Italian Communist Party at the height of the battle waged by metalworkers for a new collective agreement in 1972, said that like many others at his factory he felt that as the strikes grew in bitterness there was an emptiness that had to be filled. "I was assailed by questions, in the quest for answers my thoughts took me more and more outside the factory. It is right and just to fight for higher pay, but that is not enough. The worker is hit by the rising prices, the exorbitant rents and the glaringly inefficient school system. In this society he is dogged by injustice at every turn. This cannot be coped with without a large political organisation capable of setting tasks for today and tomorrow. In a conversation with a friend, who is a Communist, I spoke with admiration of the Communist Party's firmness in upholding its positions. The friend said: 'Why don't you join?' That was how I became a Communist."*

This simple story is more than a description of how the consciousness of a young man, who became a Communist, took shape. The story of one worker mirrored the process of the development of the consciousness of the working people: from commonplace to political, from a protest against the encountered injustices to an understanding of the injustices of the existing social system, to an understanding that it was necessary to fight the capitalist system as a whole.

The working-class movement, the struggle of the working people, knows of innumerable instances of energetic organised actions that acquired the most diverse forms, from peaceful to violent, from individual to actions embracing an entire country.

This school trains men of action, people who cannot sit with hands folded no matter what the situation in which they find themselves.

Before us is a book entitled *24 Years in Prison* by

* *Za rubezhom* No. 13, 1973, p. 10.

Melquesidez Rodriguez Chaos. It was first printed in Paris in 1968. Its author is a worker, who had been the commissar of a brigade fighting the fascists in Spain. After the defeat he was held in Franco prisons for 24 years. The language of the book is terse, even dry, but it moves the reader by its authenticity and accuracy.

The unbending Communist writes of tortures, murders, unending humiliations and refined torments. It would seem that a human being could not withstand all this, but the fascists were unable to break the Communists. Twenty-four-year-old Eugenio Mesón, executed in prison, wrote in his will: "Had I a thousand lives, I would still be a Communist."* It would seem that there was little that could be done in the terrible conditions of a Franco prison. "Despite all the hardships, the Communists were extremely active in the prison. Hundreds of comrades completed a course of ideological and political training... We brought out the *Mundo Obrero*, *Juventud*, *Nuestra Bandera* and the journal *Espartakus*."**

The Communist organisation conducted Party and general educational work. The number of people attending the general education schools sometimes reached 1,800. Many of the peasants, who had come to prison illiterate, were able to read and write when they were released six or seven years later. The Party operated in the prison and the Communists influenced everybody: the anarchists, who considered that "three brave men could accomplish three revolutions", the Republicans, the oldest of whom said: "Were I younger I would be a Communist... It is the only Party that has shown that it alone can bring a serious undertaking to completion."***

For the Communists the most important matter is to organise the masses, and in their work they constantly aim

* Melquesidez Rodriguez Chaos, *24 años en la cárcel*, Paris, 1968, p. 71.

** Ibid., pp. 206-07.

*** Ibid., p. 85.

to raise the level of the struggle. Lenin considered that the Party must be able "not only to strike casual and sporadic (and therefore not dangerous) blows at the enemy, but to pursue the enemy steadily and persistently, in a determined struggle all along the line".* Different periods require different actions, but these actions must be uninterrupted.

The Party's ideology determines its views about the essence of revolutionary action. At the same time, the make-up of the Party, organisation or group is in many ways influenced by its actions. Parties and political forces, just as individuals, are judged by their deeds and actions.

CHAPTER EIGHT

THE COMMUNISTS AND THE UNITY OF THE DEMOCRATIC FORCES

1. THE OBJECTIVE NEED AND POSSIBILITY FOR UNITY

Capitalism's deepening general crisis, which is embracing all areas of the life of bourgeois society, is widening the foundation for the emergence of the most diverse movements, many of which become massive. The actions of workers for higher pay, better working conditions and assured employment, the movement of the peasants against the high prices of machinery and the low prices of farm produce, which the monopolies sell at exorbitant prices, the mass protests of all strata of the population against inflation and the rising cost of living, the general anxiety caused by the problem of towns, medical care, education, and lack of environmental protection are not aimed directly at achieving socialist goals. But all these movements inevitably encounter resistance from the common enemy, who hinders any progressive change. This enemy is monopoly capital, whose actions are always motivated by the receipt of maximum profits.

The Communists are convinced that the transition to the socialist system is the only sure and dependable way out of the calamities of capitalism, but they actively support any struggle directed against monopoly domination and consistently press for unity among the different contin-

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 4, p. 427.

gents of the working people, of the broad masses participating in this struggle. This unity is vigorously promoted not only by internal but also by foreign political conditions, by the positive changes taking place in international relations.

The struggle for peace is a major area where broad unity can be attained among the democratic forces. Everybody wants peace, with the exception of handfuls of monopolists, armaments merchants and some segments of professional soldiers. Distinctions in political and religious views recede into the background when the matter concerns the defence of peace. Today peace means preserving civilisation and saving hundreds of millions of lives from being snuffed out in a devastating nuclear war. The Communists have always held that the idea of a united front is particularly important for uniting all people desiring peace. The international factor today acquires growing importance in the life of nations. The close connection of what takes place in each country with the processes covering the entire planet becomes more and more perceptible with the increasing dependence of the people's living standard on the successes of detente. At the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe Leonid Brezhnev said: "The understandings we have reached give the peoples more possibilities for influencing so-called 'big politics'. At the same time, they also touch upon everyday problems. They will contribute to improving the life of people, providing them with work and expanding educational opportunities. They are concerned with care for health, in short, with many things affecting individuals, families, youth and different groups of society."^{*}

It is important to note that socialism cannot be built successfully without safeguarding the democratic gains of the people, without satisfying their pressing needs. The many democratic tasks that have to be carried out on the

^{*} L. I. Brezhnev, *Following Lenin's Course*, Moscow, 1975, p. 582.

road to socialism are not a hindrance to the victory of the socialist revolution. On the contrary, given certain conditions, they expedite that victory, because where big capital is in power even purely democratic tasks cannot be carried out without significant steps in the direction of socialism.

The experience of the victorious socialist revolutions is testimony that with the movement of large sections of the population for a just settlement of democratic issues the socialist revolution advances more swiftly. The working class, which pursues socialist objectives, receives massive support from other strata of the people, who likewise want to take the land away from the landowners, establish equal national relations, put an end to fascism, and so on.

Today, by virtue of the logic of historical development no progressive social movement, whether it sets itself broad or limited partial objectives, can avoid coming into conflict with state-monopoly capital, and this creates the objective possibilities for the militant unity of the broadest forces in the struggle against the monopolies.

The Communists strive to "merge in a single stream a wide range of movements, political trends and organisations, and give the struggle a maximum of purpose. In the course of joint actions the anti-imperialist front will move more and more from the realm of slogans and conferences into the area of daily political practice".^{*}

It is an aim of the communist movement that these forces—which include practically the overwhelming majority of the people—should be not fragmented but united and that they should coordinate their actions. This is a difficult task because state-monopoly capital still has innumerable means of sowing division among the possible participants of such an alliance, of whipping up discord between them and intimidating and slandering them. All the greater then is the significance of the Communists'

^{*} *International Meeting of Communist and Workers' Parties, Moscow 1969*, p. 164.

ability to unite heterogeneous forces in the struggle for common objectives.

Also, this is a difficult task because the working-class and democratic movements are developing unevenly, and even analogous tasks have to be carried out under dissimilar conditions. Every country has its own specifics, problems and difficulties, and the actual results of the struggle achieved in one country or another differ.

The experience of the class battles provides evidence that even where large workers' parties and democratic organisations exist, pressing social changes cannot be put into effect by the efforts of any single party or organisation. United efforts are an indispensable condition for any noteworthy success.

When the Popular Unity bloc came to power in Chile in 1970 as a result of a united front of forces interested in democratic changes, it gave a powerful impetus to the development of the revolutionary process. The military-fascist coup, which deposed that bloc, was largely due also to the fact that the reactionaries succeeded in setting the middle strata against the working class and undermining democratic unity.

The joint government programme of the Left forces in France, which mirrors the objective need for closer democratic unity, immediately raised the social struggle in that country to a higher phase. The parties of monopoly capital feel a tangible threat from the Left bloc, whose backbone consists of Communists and Socialists. The parliamentary elections in 1973 and then the presidential elections in 1974 demonstrated that the strengthened and united Left forces had become a powerful factor of France's political life and could no longer be ignored. The growing unity of the forces opposed to the monopolies and imperialism is also making itself felt more and more in Italy, Japan and some Latin American countries.

Developments indicate that the mounting crisis of the capitalist system is creating ever larger possibilities for

expanding alliances of this kind. Even the bourgeois parties, if they are large, cannot help being affected by the rising disaffection of the people. In the Central Committee report to the 14th Congress of the Italian Communist Party in March 1975 it is noted that because the Christian Democratic Party has its roots in different strata of the population, including the working people, "the task of the Communists is to work for a modification of its orientation, of the guidelines of its policy in a consistently democratic and anti-fascist spirit, in the spirit of a policy of reforms and concord with all the forces representing the working and other strata of the people".* The French Communists believe that the conditions are ripe for rapprochement with the patriotic Gaullists protesting against the anti-national policy of the monopolies.

The leaders of the Social-Democratic Party in the FRG flatly reject any possibility of contacts with the Communists of that country. While favouring agreement with socialist countries, they conduct virulent campaigns against the Communists of their own country. The Social-Democratic Party of the FRG is likewise a heterogeneous mass organisation and its leaders have considerable trouble with the young Socialists, who want joint actions with the Communists.

At the 1969 International Meeting of Communist and Workers' Parties it was recorded that "Communists, who attribute decisive importance to working-class unity, are in favour of cooperation with the Socialists and Social-Democrats to establish an advanced democratic regime today and to build a socialist society in the future".** Naturally, before this can be attained the Socialist parties and other political organisations propounding socialism must abandon their policy of class cooperation with the bourgeoisie.

* *L'Unità*, March 19, 1975.

** *International Meeting of Communist and Workers' Parties, Moscow, 1969*, p. 24.

The Communist parties are the most consistent and resolute champions of the socialist system, but the principle of "all or nothing at all" is alien to them.

They are aware that at the present level of the political consciousness of the majority of the population in the capitalist countries maximalist demands cannot provide the foundation for uniting the broadest democratic strata of the people. But it is possible to organise a large-scale struggle for slogans appreciated by people of the most diverse views and convictions and significant to different social forces. They, therefore, stress what can unite these forces. Any accentuation of differences only plays into the hands of the enemies of the working people.

Although Jacques Duclos, candidate of the French Communist Party, polled 5 million votes at the presidential elections in 1969, it was obvious to the Communist Party that the conditions had not ripened for the majority of the electors to vote for a Communist. At the 1974 elections the FCP supported the Socialist candidate François Mitterrand, who polled 13 million votes. Moreover, the Communists have to take into account the fact that today a large section of the French people are not yet convinced that socialism is the sole certain way out of the crisis affecting the capitalist countries.

The Manifesto published by the French Communist Party in 1968 under the heading *For Advanced Democracy, for a Socialist France* differs from the joint government programme of the Communists, Socialists and Left Radicals. However, the Communist Party accepted the joint programme because it is directed against the monopolies and can serve as the basis for broad democratic unity.

With the radicalisation of the masses, including the petty bourgeoisie, increasing urgency is acquired by the question of the Communist Party's contacts and cooperation with all organisations enjoying influence among various strata and capable of making a definite contribution to the development of the revolutionary process. That ex-

plains why the French Communists are working to form a broad popular alliance, in which all these forces would find their place in the struggle for the common aims uniting them. The resolution adopted by the 21st Extraordinary Congress of the French Communist Party defines the character of this broad alliance in the following words: "To whom do we propose an alliance? To all working people, to all the victims of big capital, to the entire people of France, excluding only a handful of big businessmen and their political myrmidons."*

The working class is the vital foundation and motive force of this broad unity, its most resolute, most dynamic segment that is most devoted to democratic changes. It was noted at the 21st Congress of the FCP that many intellectuals were beginning to realise that the conditions of their life could only be guaranteed under a new democracy. Among agricultural workers, artisans and shopkeepers there was growing awareness that fundamental changes were needed. Small and medium entrepreneurs, who suffered from the policies of the big monopolies, were worried about their future. Professional soldiers were increasingly coming round to the realisation that the Armed Forces must serve the common interests of the entire nation. Growing numbers of women and young people were joining the democratic movement.**

It is by no means mandatory that among the participants in the alliance there should be agreement on all issues. What is wanted is that they should want democratic changes, a society where there would be more justice and freedom.

The formation of such an alliance requires a huge effort. It requires patience and perseverance, and the ability to settle differences and, most important of all, end the bias against Communists, a bias that is fanned by imperi-

* *Cahiers du communisme*, November 1974, p. 119.

** Ibid., pp. 110-23.

alist reaction, the Right reformist leaders and the innumerable schools of Leftist anti-communism. But the Communists consider that these difficulties can and must be coped with because no cause is more important today for the success of the revolutionary struggle than the creation of broad unity, and they are working to this end with conviction and perseverance.

Under present-day conditions a Communist Party's ability to unite different contingents of the working people, and for that purpose to establish contacts with other democratic organisations, is becoming a primary indication of its strength and understanding of the significance of the situation.

Proficiency in the art of fostering inter-party relations, the Communists believe, helps to achieve greater mutual understanding and enlarge the ranks of the militant forces.

In all countries the Communists initiate new constructive proposals that can unite the most diverse strata of the working people; they stretch hand out to people professing religious faiths, work for unity in the trade union movement and are prepared to reach long-term agreement also on individual specific issues. "For a genuine socialist force there can be no alternative to the Leninist strategy of alliances," states the resolution passed at the 13th Congress of the Italian Communist Party in March 1972. "Outside it there is no way except a return to one or another form of opportunism or empty pseudo-revolutionary maximalism."^{*}

2. UNDER COVER OF "LEFT" VERBAGE AGAINST LEFT UNITY

While the communist movement has always striven to enlarge the social basis of the anti-capitalist struggle, imaginary Leftism declares that "any talk about unity is

^{*} XIII Congresso del Partito comunista italiano. Atti e risoluzioni, p. 494.

betrayal of the revolution" and seeks to impel the Communists to abandon their work among the masses and adopt the road of separatism and sectarianism.

Having no durable links with any class or social stratum, the Leftists scorn the masses and their revolutionary potentialities and refuse to accept concepts such as "democratic struggle", "democratic forces" and "democratic demands", arguing that the struggle for these demands distracts from the objective of "immediately overthrowing" the capitalist system. Any effort to create unity on the basis of the struggle for democratic demands is therefore labelled "non-revolutionary", denigrated as reformism and "as strengthening the capitalist system". We, they declare, shall remain in "proud isolation" but we shall not "besmirch" ourselves by fighting for aims that are not of a direct socialist character.

In the USA the pseudo-revolutionaries denounced the Negro Civil Rights Movement for not giving prominence to slogans calling for society's socialist reorganisation. The American Communists take into account the fact that in this movement there are many people who do not link Negro rights with the struggle for socialism. More, in that movement there are people with anti-socialist feeling, people who are held captive by the prejudices spread by bourgeois propaganda. But practice has shown that because of its mass character the movement has become a major political factor helping to shatter the foundations and pattern of capitalist society with its racial discrimination and social injustice. They hold that the "selectivity" (i.e., considering as participants in the movement only those who advocate socialism) being imposed by the Leftist groups is sectarianism, pure and simple, which threatens to nullify the mass movement.

Wherever an alliance of the democratic forces is taking shape the Leftists endeavour to discredit it. In France they go to all lengths to attack the Left joint government programme and campaign against what they

term as "united frontism", "coalitionism" and the "bluff of unitarism".

The British Trotskyists consider that the policy of the French Communist Party spells out "attraction for parliamentarism" and urge the erection of impediments to the implementation of the French Communists' programme guidelines.

While branding as reformist any effort made by the Communist parties to strengthen anti-monopoly unity, the Leftists style themselves as proponents of the most resolute actions that allegedly can lead at once to the socialist revolution. The *Il Manifesto* group, which proclaimed itself a "party" in 1974, attacks the Communists and "opposes compromises with the reformists", claiming that for Italy "there is only one alternative: the socialist revolution".*

The recipes offered by the Leftists for bringing the masses to the socialist revolution are as simplified as can be. They suggest demands and slogans that cannot be achieved under capitalism. They contend that the outcome of this "radicalisation of demands" will be that the working people, reduced to desperation, will see for themselves that capitalism must be replaced by socialism.

Soon after Salvador Allende's election as President in Chile the Leftists began demanding a general nationalisation of the land, the confiscation of all private enterprises, and so on. The Trotskyist Revolutionary Workers' Party, Leftist and other groups opposed the unity of all the anti-imperialist and anti-oligarchy forces in the struggle for revolutionary reforms. On August 31, 1973, ten days before the fascist putsch, the Chilean Trotskyists demanded the resignation of the Allende Government.

The Leftist actions seriously prejudiced the develop-

* *Il Manifesto*, March 14, 1974, p. 3.

ment of the Chilean revolution. On October 11, 1973, the Communist Party of Chile published an address in which it declared that it was quite certain that its unconditional defence of the Popular Unity Government, its steps to achieve understanding with other democratic circles, especially in the lower echelons, its striving to instil confidence in the middle strata of the population, its efforts to direct the main thrust against the principal enemies—imperialism and internal reaction—and its perseverance in strengthening the alliance of the Communists and the Socialists, the unity of the working class and understanding between the Popular Unity parties were components of a correct general policy.

This policy was attacked by the Leftist organisations, who thereby rendered Chilean reaction and US imperialism an invaluable service. The bitter lessons of the fascist coup taught something to some members of these organisations. Operating underground they have begun to cooperate with the Communists and the Socialists.

However, the Chilean lessons went over the heads of the Leftists in other countries. They continue their tactics of hindering the unity of the democratic anti-imperialist forces.

As evil spirits demanding an artificial acceleration of events, the Trotskyists and other Leftist elements appear wherever the situation aggravates, and by their irresponsible calls provoke and disorganise the democratic forces. In Portugal, virtually a few days after the overthrow of the fascist regime, they began urging the immediate enforcement of socialist reforms. At the close of May 1974 the Central Committee of the Portuguese Communist Party published a communique in which it condemned the manoeuvres of the reactionary elements that had not yet been removed from their posts, noting that their manipulations had the deliberate or unwitting support of groups of adventurists calling themselves "Lefts" and trying to push the country into eco-

nomic chaos and nullify the democratic gains that had been achieved.

But in attacking the unity of the democratic forces the Leftists do not always venture to declare openly what they actually intend to do. When the idea of unity sinks deeper into the minds of the people, even the ultra-Rights endeavour to camouflage their policy. In Peru, for example, where with the support of the democratic forces the military Government of Juan Velasco Alvarado has given effect to important progressive reforms, the mainstay of the reactionaries—the Alianza Popular Revolucionaria Americana—came out with demagogic slogans about pseudo-unity. The APRA is out to form an association of all who are discontented with the Government's policies. They speciously call these anti-democratic associations "popular fronts".

While the extreme Right APRA uses the slogan of "popular fronts" in keeping with the swing in mass feeling, the small groups that declare they are the "most revolutionary" cannot fail to understand that it is becoming increasingly senseless to act openly against unity. And in their "programmes" one now and then comes across appeals for a united front. The Leftists adopt the stance of people who are misunderstood and hurt when they are accused of undermining unity.

What is the unity of the pseudo-revolutionaries? The French Trotskyists declare: "No agreement is conceivable save on the basis of the programme of the Fourth International." The British Trotskyists are prepared for "unity" only when it is "based on the transitional programme of the Fourth International".

Gerry Healy, one of the leaders of the London "International Committee of the Fourth International", stated bluntly: "When we talk of unity with an opponent organisation it is to get rid of that organisation."^{*} While

^{*} *Morning Star*, April 18, 1972.

regarding the Left-radical organisations as rivals, the Trotskyists try to use them to recruit supporters.

The attitude to Communists was defined in the so-called "transitional programme" adopted at the constituent conference of the "Fourth International" in 1938. It declared that its main task was to fight the Communists, whom it called "betrayers of the revolution". All the "programme" documents adopted by the Trotskyist groups since then are worded in an openly anti-communist spirit.

But something new was observed in the first half of the 1970s. In some capitalist countries the Trotskyists declared their "critical support" for the Communist parties and their candidates at parliamentary elections.

Although the architects of these tactics do not refer to Trotsky, their basic elements and actual aims had been formulated by him in 1940.* For more than three decades the Trotskyists did not venture to employ the tactics of "critical support", with the exception of the beginning of the 1960s. In four of the "Fourth International's" existing six groups there are now many proponents of these tactics but, essentially speaking, these are none other than the tactics of "entryism" under a new name.

J. Posadas declared: "We shall act inside the Communist parties with all the means at our disposal in order to prevail upon rank-and-file Communists to adopt

* In June 1940, Trotsky told his American followers that they should go over to a policy of "critical support" for the Communists. In that way it would be easier to draw closer to rank-and-file Communists and enlist their support. He said: "If we manage to persuade them that we have a common language, we shall be able to turn them against their leaders." Answering the fears that these tactics might undermine Trotskyism, he called his recommendations "a short-term manoeuvre" designed to catch the Communists unawares. The talk with the American Trotskyists ended with general phrases to the effect that the suggested tactics should be "seriously studied and discussed".

a critical attitude towards their leadership and forthwith give effect to the necessary changes.”*

In order somehow to justify this sudden “interest in cooperation”, the Trotskyists have recourse to various devices, including coarse flattery. The Italian Trotskyists, for instance, say that the Communists “are a Party that has the support of the main categories of the working class and is in the centre of the struggle against capitalism in the country”. The Belgian Trotskyists state that the Communist Party “can fulfil the role of a centre that would organise round itself a united front embracing the Socialist Party, the Left Christians, the progressive Trotskyist tendencies and the trade unions”. In order to mislead politically inexperienced people, they claim that they “too are Communists” and “part of the communist movement”, a “trend of world communism” and so forth.

It does not embarrass the Trotskyists that their manoeuvres are sharply at variance with what they had been saying only recently. In 1969 A. Krivine said: “As far as we are concerned, we clearly state that we are against this alliance of Left-wing forces.” Later, the self-same Krivine assured his supporters that their membership of anti-imperialist alliances would give them new possibilities. “We shall be a path in the sea of the Left alliance,** he declared.

The 1970s saw many cases of the Trotskyists trying to make capital out of the idea of unity and using it for anti-communist purposes. Very often they deliberately create explosive situations in order to prevent the strengthening of anti-imperialist unity. For example, at a peace demonstration in Marseilles in July 1972 the Trotskyists came out with slogans calling for unity and, at the same time, with leaflets denigrating it and slander-

* *Lut'e Ouvrière*, March 1, 1973.

** *Jeune Révolutionnaire* No. 29, 1972, p. 15.

ing the policy of the Communists. This is what the Trotskyist tactics of “critical support for the Communists” looks like in practice.

The Communist parties are, of course, extremely wary of any attempts of the Leftist groups to portray themselves as prepared for cooperation. The Communists have found time and again that the participation of Leftist groups in the working-class and democratic movement is fraught with negative consequences. They refuse to take the responsibility for the adventurist actions of these groups or give possibilities for new speculation to those who deliberately identify the Left forces with Leftist elements.

In the documents drawn up for its 10th Congress in June 1974, the Swiss Party of Labour defined its attitude to the Leftist groups. The Swiss Communists had become convinced that the “experiments at collaboration with these groups were the mainspring of harmful confusion in our policy and that joint action with them in no way strengthened the movement of the working class”.* The sectarian Leftist groups are isolated from the masses and represent nobody except themselves. A very important condition for a real and not imagined expansion of the movement is joint action with organisations enjoying influence in one or another stratum of the population.

The experience of the French Communist Party makes it clear to all the forces entering the united Left front that it is not in their interests even to find themselves outwardly in the same harness with extremist Leftism. Léo Figuères writes that “this would be tantamount to Communist recognition of ‘Left’ anti-communism, which, with the Right, has always been in France the main barrier to unity among all the forces genuinely desiring to fight for democracy and socialism”.**

* *Voix Ouvrière*, April 17, 1974.

** *Struggle of the Communists Against the Ideology of Trotskyism*, p. 83 (in Russian).

But the Communists are aware that in the Leftist groups there are sincere romantics who believe they have found the best road to socialism. For that reason, while being irreconcilable to Leftism, the Communist parties do not regard every person coming under the influence of pseudo-revolutionary feeling as lost to revolutionary action. The best way to fight Leftist elements is to promote broad and more active democratic unity. At the same time, the tangible successes of joint actions in the struggle against the monopolies undermine many of the roots nourishing Leftism.

3. UNITY AND THE IDEOLOGICAL STRUGGLE

In coming to far-reaching agreements for the sake of the struggle for specific objectives, the Communists are prepared to stop criticising their allies provided criticism is not necessitated by special circumstances. In the agreement between the French Communist and Socialist parties, to which the Left Radicals have subscribed, it is stated that these parties would avoid polemics that could injure the joint programme, and if necessary they would turn over any dispute between them to the standing liaison committee.

While bending every effort to strengthen unity of action, the Communists do not, under any circumstances, find it admissible to form ideological blocs, agree to compromises in ideology or make concessions in principles. In *"Left-Wing" Communism—an Infantile Disorder* Lenin recalled that during the First World War the Bolsheviks concluded a certain compromise with the supporters of Kautsky, the Left Mensheviks and a segment of the Socialist-Revolutionaries, conferred with them in Zimmerwald and Kinthal and issued joint manifestos, but "we never ceased and never relaxed our ideological

and political struggle against the Kautskyites, Martov and Chernov".*

Had the agreement with the reformists involved the cessation of the struggle against reformism the workers would have had grounds for asking how, properly speaking, the Communists differed from the reformists. It would have signified a death sentence to the Communist Party. Time and again Lenin warned that joint actions must exclude every possibility for a retreat from the Party programme and the Party's political guidelines, that where ideological blocs were concerned "we must permit no such blocs with anyone".**

However, for the sake of broad democratic unity the revisionist elements renounce the basic principles of Marxism-Leninism and are prepared to deny the Communist Party its own image. In Finland, for instance, during the Party discussion in the 1960s on the role of the Communist Party in the united front of democratic forces it was asserted that it should not "categorically reject ideological compromises either, if they help the working class and socialism". The reservation "if they help the working class and socialism" is only one of the ways by which efforts are made to obscure opportunist views although in this case the matter concerns quite definite intentions.

An ideological compromise is inevitably prejudicial to the cause of the working class and socialism because to sacrifice the purity of revolutionary principles in payment for the unity of the democratic forces signifies the renunciation of the proletariat's leading role in the struggle for democracy and socialism.

However broad the alliance is, the Communist Party will not allow reducing itself to the status of an unequal partner and cannot surrender its independence. It

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 31, p. 72.

** Ibid., Vol. 12, p. 473.

always acts openly, without concealing its views. There must be, as Rodney Arismendi wrote, "a correct balance between unity and the ideological struggle".*

Although the Communists are convinced that an alliance with the Socialists can be the foundation for broad democratic unity, they do not in any way modify their attitude to reformism. The substance of reformism is by no means that its proponents want reforms. The Communists have never rejected reforms if they ease the condition of the working people. But unlike the reformists, they do not consider that reforms solve the fundamental question of the revolution, the question of the class character of power.

For the reformist a reform is a means of mitigating social contradictions, preventing mass action by the working people and paring down the ideals of the working class to concessions that can be obtained today. The revolutionary Marxist regards reforms not only as a means of improving the material and social condition of the working people but also as a way of helping the working class to understand its own strength and put forward fundamental demands that spell out an invasion into the realm of property and the power of capital. "The only *sound* basis for reforms," Lenin wrote, "the one serious guarantee that they will not be fictitious, will be used for the benefit of the people, is the independent revolutionary struggle of the proletariat that *does not lower the level* of its slogans."**

In view of the radical changes taking place in the world and the growing interest of the people in socialism, social-reformism likewise cannot help undergoing modification. It has become the fashion and quite commonplace to tag the socialist label to old reformist goods.

* Rodney Arismendi, *Lenin, the Revolution and Latin America*, p. 532 (Russian translation).

** V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 12, p. 238.

Many of the demands that the reformists had only recently proclaimed to be "propaganda", unrealistic and incitement have today been adopted if not by all of them then in any case by their Left wing. In some Socialist parties there is a tendency to present themselves in the eyes of the working people as being more radical than the Communists.

At a plenary meeting of the CC of the French Communist Party devoted to the results of the parliamentary elections of 1973 it was noted that there was not only Right reformism: when the masses swung to the Left it might give itself a "Left" label.

The Communists, naturally, cannot ignore either the old or the new manifestations of social-reformism. An alliance of the Communists with the reformists does not remove the distinctions and the differences between them. Under no circumstances will the Communist parties allow their revolutionary views to be eclipsed by reformist ideas. They endeavour to lead the largest possible number of people away from the influence of reformist ideas and enlist them to the side of revolutionary policy.

They make every effort to fight reformism constructively, showing the distinctions between reformist conceptions and their revolutionary views, developing Marxist-Leninist theory and strengthening unity of the basis of joint actions without evading an examination of issues requiring serious discussion and a comparison of attitudes. When it is inexpedient to attack one or another view by means of polemics, Lenin recommended doing so in a positive manner by making a class analysis of developments and showing the link between the struggle for immediate objectives and the socialist prospect.

The Communists do not regard alliances with other Left forces solely as pre-election agreements. They are prepared to promote and strengthen unity day by day. The bourgeoisie goes all out to isolate the Communists

from their allies, drive a wedge between them and provoke and fan differences. During the 1973 parliamentary elections in France, when the Left forces acted jointly, the ruling circles attacked mainly the Communists. They started an unbridled anti-communist campaign and took steps to break the alliance of the Left forces, to push the Socialist Party to the Right.

Some people in the Socialist Party succumbed to this pressure and joined in some of the attacks against the Communists. The striving to drive back the Communist Party found expression, in particular, in guidelines that were quite clearly formulated in the headings of a number of articles written by Socialists: "We Do Not Want Communists", "The Balance in the Left Forces Must Be Changed" and so on. The demand for a realignment of the Left forces is directed against the Communists and may undermine the struggle against the Right, a struggle the Left forces had pledged to conduct together.

The Communists strictly abide by their commitment to avoid all polemics that can harm the joint programme, but, naturally, they do not consider it possible to remain silent when they are attacked by their allies.

For the Communist parties the alliance of the democratic forces fighting monopoly capital is neither a tactical manoeuvre nor a temporary situation guideline. It is the main orientation for mobilising the masses for the struggle for peace, democracy and socialism. They are convinced, given all the importance of the contacts and agreements established on the level of party leadership, that the main thing is practical action into which the masses are drawn. After the defeat of the first Russian revolution, when the liquidators attempted to dissolve the Bolshevik Party in a non-party congress allegedly for the purpose of expanding working-class unity, Lenin wrote: "It is the real struggle that unites. It is the development of parties, their continued struggle inside par-

liament and outside of it that unites, it is the general strike, etc., that unites."^{*} The Communist parties consider it their duty to come forward as the initiators and organisers of unity among the democratic forces and help promote their militant, anti-monopoly character.

4. ROLE OF COMMUNISTS IN THE DEMOCRATIC ALLIANCE

As the most consistent revolutionary organisations, the Communist parties do not conceal their striving to give a revolutionary orientation to the mass struggle and play the leading role in it. Needless to say, they regard this role solely as springing from their energy, initiative, clarity of class position, staunchness, determination and constant promotion of socialist consciousness among the masses. They categorically reject the misguided formulation of the question of the leading role of one or another party as a preliminary condition for joining democratic alliances or of strengthening own positions at the expense of allies. On the other hand, they utterly dismiss the essentially opportunist arguments of the opponents of unity, who allege that an independent, active leading role consonant with a Party's actual position in the mass movement weakens the alliance of the democratic forces and undermines cooperation in it.

The Right revisionists maintain that today the question of a party's leading role is seen in an entirely new light. Can one speak of cooperation and, at the same time, underscore one's "leading" position? No party wishes to play a secondary role.

On the pretext that democratic unity must be expanded the revisionists put forward liquidationist proposals relative to the Communist parties. For instance, Roger

^{*} V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 12, pp. 323-24.

Garaudy urged the French Communists seriously to reconsider the very conception of "Party and its organisation" in order to smooth contacts with other parties. The Austrian revisionists insisted on the abandonment of the existing type of Communist parties and "the formation of new associations of Marxists and non-Marxists, of Communists and Social-Democrats, of Catholics and Protestants".*

Similar "advice" had been given by the revisionists in Finland and some other countries. Arguing that the day of classical political parties has gone and that the future belongs to broad, loose, flexible and democratic parties, they criticised the Communist Party of Finland for being bound by strict discipline and giving "too much" prominence to the question of its teaching or the purity of this teaching.

The Socialist Electoral League consisting of the Communist Party of Norway, the Socialist People's Party and the Democratic Socialists, was formed in Norway in April 1973 as a result of the struggle against Norway's entry into the Common Market. At the elections in September of the same year the SEL polled 11.2 per cent of the votes, i.e., two and a half times more votes than all these parties polled earlier when they had acted separately. The SEL could have continued developing as an organisation of cooperation among the Left forces. But it was suggested using it to set up a political party that would mean an end to the independence of the Communist Party. The discussion of this proposal in the Communist Party of Norway showed that the overwhelming majority of the Communists wanted the Party to remain independent, to continue its activities on a Marxist-Leninist, internationalist foundation and, at the same time, expand cooperation with all democratic forces. The Communist parties categorically oppose any

* *Stern*, November 30, 1969, p. 144.

tendency to achieve Left unity "at any cost", much less at the cost of unprincipled compromises.

But when they join broad alliances, the Communists do not regard as rivals the parties or organisations with which they reach agreement on joint action. In the documents of the Essen Congress of the German Communist Party it is stated that the Communists do not make claims to leadership but want the aims and forms of joint actions to be worked out in discussions attended by all the participants on a basis of equality and mutual respect.

In the resolution of the 24th Congress of the Communist Party of Denmark in 1973 it is stressed that to ensure unity among the democratic forces was the day-to-day task of the Communists and the immutable method of promoting the struggle of the working class and the people. The Communist Party acted on the principle that unity required a loyal attitude to the foundation of joint actions in order to strengthen mutual trust.

The Communists hold that the weakening of any organisation in the course of the joint struggle weakens the entire united front, and that it is in the common interest for each organisation or party to extend its influence among the strata of the population represented by it. The experience of France, Japan and other countries shows that joint struggle strengthens all the organisations participating in it. Both the Communist and the Socialist parties of these countries grew stronger and larger during the joint struggle and won increasing influence. For example, at the 1969 presidential elections in France the Socialist Party polled 5 per cent of the votes and the Communist Party received 21 per cent of the votes. In 1974 the two parties, together with the Left Radicals, received the support of 49.2 per cent of the electorate.

The Communists do not see any danger to the alliance of the democratic forces if the organisations in that al-

liance compete for influence among the people and develop their militant activity: the common cause only benefits by this.

The Communist parties do not conduct talks on the "leading role" but strive to achieve that role by their work, by showing the masses that they correctly articulate and safeguard their interests. A Party does this not by words but by deeds.

The Communists strive to fight as actively as possible for the satisfaction of the cardinal demands of the working people. They lay no claim to a dominant role or to exclusive privileges, understanding that the common struggle benefits when the democratic forces entering into an alliance work for success not at each other's expense but together.

The initiative, vigour and growing influence of the Communist parties are the way to enhancing their leading role in democratic alliances. While laying no claim to any special position, the Communists strive to be the most resolute champions of the day-to-day requirements of the people, and the most consistent and staunchest participants in the common struggle. The Communist Party, says the resolution of the 21st Extraordinary Congress of the French Communist Party, has proved by its work its ability to be the vanguard of the nationwide struggle of the workers and all other people. It has proved that by playing this decisive role, which belongs precisely to it, it is not motivated by a desire to dominate or by a spirit of exclusiveness. Its only striving is to serve the common cause to the best of its ability.

While strengthening unity with all the organisations in the Left alliance, the Communists strive to expand their work among the people, foster in them a militant spirit and a readiness for joint action. The activity of the people, above all, of the working class is what enhances democratic unity, and the certainty of the people

that their strength lies in the leadership provided by the revolutionary Communist Party.

To combine a readiness to strengthen the anti-imperialist alliance with an ideological struggle in this alliance is a complex policy requiring a principled stand and flexibility.

In Third World countries, where the intricate evolution of the national liberation struggle into a struggle for a democratic, progressive settlement of all the problems confronting these countries is under way, the Communists strive to be an active force in broad anti-imperialist fronts. They hold that the possibility for unity of various democratic forces with the Communists depends largely on the prestige enjoyed by the Communist Party.

Whatever broad anti-imperialist alliances were joined by the Communists they never surrendered their independence. Right-opportunist tendencies in the Communist Party of Sri Lanka were criticised at that Party's Eighth Congress in August 1972. The Party leadership, it was stated at the congress, "was reluctant to take independent initiatives to ... mobilise the people for the anti-imperialist and democratic programme. The leadership was of the opinion that such action would disrupt unity or serve the Right wing and the reactionary forces. This was a serious shortcoming in the work of the Party".*

Proceeding from the fact that the Communist Party supports the ruling Indian National Congress, which is fighting internal reaction and imperialism, some Indian Communists suggested that for the sake of the united front the Party should put forward a programme and employ forms of struggle acceptable to the ruling party. In the Communist Party press this standpoint was justifiably assessed as absolutely wrong: "It is based on the abandonment of the most fundamental viewpoint of

* *World Marxist Review*, July 1973, p. 33.

Marxism-Leninism, i.e., its proletarian class approach. It completely negates, further, the independent role, initiative and struggle of the CPI, which is an indispensable part of its united front tactics. It betrays a revisionist and tailist attitude to the problem of building the united front.”*

The Indian Communists want the broadest possible democratic alliance. They are prepared to cooperate with the Indian National Congress wherever possible. They have no intention of imposing a programme of common struggle on anyone. On the other hand, they cannot permit anybody to force such a programme on them, and are convinced that the united front tactics can be pursued successfully as they gain strength, expand their links with the masses and work energetically.

There are special conditions for developing broad democratic unity in countries ruled by national-democratic parties pursuing a progressive anti-imperialist policy.

The Progressive National Front, formed in 1972 and uniting the Syrian Communist Party and the Baath Party, did much to unite the people against the Israeli aggression in 1973 and to abolish the consequences of that aggression. In the course of decades of struggle for the people's interests the Syrian Communist Party proved that it was consistently striving for unity. The Communist Party regards the forces with whom it seeks to form an alliance as comrades-in-arms and not as rivals. It seeks the ways and means of reaching agreement with them not in order to quarrel with and split them. In reply to anti-communist slander, it underscored that it has no intention of absorbing anyone and will not permit anyone to absorb it. The Communists called for a mass, popular front.

The Syrian Communists think highly of the Progressive National Front and are working to turn that front

* *Party Life*, January 1974, p. 15.

into a force capable of organising working people for the settlement of the social problems facing Syria.

The formation of the Progressive National Patriotic Front of Iraq in 1973, uniting the Baath Party and the Communist Party, was a major achievement of the democratic forces. The Iraqi Communists, who have been fighting for the creation of a National Front ever since their Party was founded, have always considered that in the conditions obtaining in their country the intention to form a front in the shape of a single party ignores the existence of different social classes. They hold that the striving to dissolve or isolate the Party of the working class for the sake of national unity would lead to an intensification of Right-wing tendencies in the national movement. For that reason they safeguard the ideological, organisational and political independence of each party, which represents the classes and strata opposed to imperialism and internal reaction.

At the signing of the Charter of the Progressive National Patriotic Front, Aziz Mohammed, First Secretary of the CC of the Iraqi Communist Party, said: “In spite of the importance of the event we are witnessing today, our aspirations, the aspirations of all Communists, go beyond the framework of this militant document and the alliance linking our parties together. We want this framework to become wider. There is no limit to our hopes and aspirations, for anyone who stops seeking progress ceases to be a revolutionary.”*

The Iraqi Communists are working to widen the mass basis of the Front, particularly among workers, peasants, students and women. They want the alliance of parties to become a powerful political force capable of inspiring and leading the masses in the struggle against imperialism, Zionism and reaction, for economic development and the country's prosperity.

* *World Marxist Review*, June 1974, p. 38.

However the situation develops the Communist parties cannot allow their hands to be tied relative to their leadership of the masses. In history there have been cases when broad class alliances were formed not through negotiations between parties but directly in the course of a mass struggle. Referring to the events of the first Russian revolution and answering those who considered that the alliance with the peasants had to be formed through a "strong peasant party", Lenin wrote that in the course of the revolution the "coalitions" of the proletariat and the peasantry were formed *scores and hundreds of times*, in the most diverse forms, without any 'powerful independent party' of the peasantry".*

In Russia in 1917 the unity of the working class and its alliance with the bulk of the peasants were achieved not through agreement with other parties. On the contrary, in order to build up militant unity among the masses that could overthrow capitalism the Bolsheviks had to wage a struggle against the conciliator parties that still had some support among the people. Without exposing the Mensheviks and the Socialist-Revolutionaries it would have been impossible to achieve broad proletarian-led unity among the working people, unity that resulted in the triumph of the Great October Socialist Revolution. Although the Bolshevik alliance with the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries made a certain contribution towards strengthening the alliance of the working class with the peasants it proved to be short-lived. The class struggle stepped beyond that alliance and the people united around one party, the Communist Party.

Today broad democratic unity in the capitalist countries takes shape most successfully through agreements between and joint actions by political parties. However, the revolutionary struggle is complex and contradictory.

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 15, p. 371.

Mass unity on one issue or another may not acquire the form expected as a result of an election.

The referendum forced upon Italy by the ruling Christian Democrats and the reactionary clergy in 1974 on the question of the repeal of the law permitting divorce was regarded by its initiators as a means of steering the country's development to the Right. But the hopes set on the influence of the Catholic Church, which was against divorce, and on electors traditionally voting for the Christian Democrats failed to materialise. Electors belonging to different classes and holding different political views gave a rebuff to the reactionaries, who had wide recourse to all forms of pressure and psychologically brainwashing the masses. Nearly 2,700,000 electors, who usually voted for the Christian Democrats and other bourgeois parties, supported the Communists, the Socialists and the other democratic forces. This gave rise to a united front of 19 million Italians, among whom there were many rank-and-file Christian Democrats.

In his assessment of this referendum, Enrico Berlinguer said at a joint plenary meeting of the Central Committee and Central Control Commission of the ICP in June 1974 that "this was not simply a victory in a purely defensive battle, but a political event that opens up new possibilities for the country's democratic development and renewal in all areas".*

A Party prepared to form broad alliances and preserving its ability to act independently and maintaining constant contact with the masses cannot be caught unawares by any turn of events. But to be in that position it must be sovereign and independent.

Lenin wrote that the conditions for joint action by parties were "complete clarity and definiteness in the relations between parties, trends, and shades" and that "only full clarity in mutual relations can guarantee the

* *L'Unità*, June 4, 1974.

success of an agreement to achieve a common immediate aim".* Characteristic in this respect was Lenin's remark at the Third Congress of the RSDLP (1905) regarding L. B. Krasin's suggestion that in the thesis "safeguard the independence of the Social-Democratic Party" the word "safeguard" should be replaced with "preserve". Lenin said: "Our task is not only to 'preserve' the independence of the Social-Democratic Party, but constantly to 'safeguard' it."** By this he stressed that to safeguard the Party's independence was not a task for one occasion only but an immutable task under all circumstances.

Live, developing and working for broad unity among the democratic forces, the Communist Party constantly looks for the best forms of its own organisation in keeping with the tasks of the moment. It never forgets Lenin's words: "Whatever the outcome, we must remain an independent, purely proletarian Party, which steadfastly leads the working masses to their great socialist goal."***

The world communist movement is firmly determined to secure Left unity and widen that unity in every possible way. The International Meeting of Communist and Workers' Parties in 1969 noted that the socio-political situation obtained in the world was making it possible to raise the anti-imperialist struggle to a new level and called for united action by all Communists, all opponents of imperialism, all forces desiring peace, freedom and social progress. Developments have borne out the viability and enormous potentialities of the policy of unity.

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 8, pp. 164-65.

** Ibid., Vol. 8, p. 399.

*** Ibid., Vol. 13, p. 426.

CHAPTER NINE

INTERNATIONAL AND NATIONAL RESPONSIBILITY OF THE VANGUARD

As parties of the new type, the make-up of the Marxist-Leninist parties is determined to a large extent by their profound internationalism. Proletarian internationalism mirrors the actual processes fostering economic links between different countries, and the reciprocal economic dependence of nations and, particularly, the struggle of national contingents of working people. A key component of the ideology of the revolutionary class, internationalism is becoming an ever sharper weapon of the class struggle.

Capitalism has long ago become an international force, and capitalist integration is strengthening the rule of the largest multinational monopolies in the capitalist countries. In this situation any vagueness relative to internationalism or underestimation of the importance of joint action by the working people of all countries inevitably serves international capital.

Although the multinational monopolies regard as their "homeland" any part of the world where they can receive the highest profits, they vigorously fan nationalism, which the bourgeoisie needs in order to use its countries in the competitive struggle with other multinational mo-

nopolies and, chiefly, to alienate working people of different nationalities and whip up chauvinism and racial hatred. In order to obscure the crisis of neocolonialism and portray the just striving of the newly free nations for equal economic relations with the former colonial powers as the cause of its difficulties, the bourgeoisie inflames intolerance of coloured peoples. But the principal use that the reactionaries make of nationalism is as a means of exciting distrust and prejudice relative to socialist countries and undermining the unity of the international communist movement from within.

The anti-communist bourgeois strategists believe, as was reported by an anti-communist journal published by the US Information Agency, that nationalism is a more potent force in the modern world than ideology.* Whatever its shape, nationalism expresses bourgeois ideology, while internationalism is the ideology of the working class.

Cultivated for centuries and playing on man's natural attachment for his country, language, traditions and customs, nationalism has time without number been the means used by the bourgeoisie for conquest and for the defence of its class rule. The successes of internationalism's struggle against nationalistic ideology and practice will increasingly affect the further development of the working-class and national liberation movements. International reaction will redouble its attempts to estrange the main revolutionary torrents and weaken them from within with all the means at its disposal, particularly nationalism. This enhances the importance of the consistent internationalism of the Marxist-Leninist parties, which head the anti-imperialist struggle, and of the unity between their national and international responsibility.

* *Problems of Communism*, January-February 1970, p. 6.

1. INTERNATIONALISM VERSUS NATIONALISM AND COSMOPOLITISM

As it penetrates the working-class movement bourgeois nationalism holds out the threat of deforming the parties of the working class and sapping their revolutionary spirit. Let us recall the tragic years of the First World War, when deceived by "patriotic" slogans and poisoned by chauvinism the working people of different countries were made to slaughter each other for the sake of the interests of "their" bourgeoisie. Many Social-Democratic leaders, who had shortly before vowed fidelity to proletarian internationalism, proved to be the most ordinary chauvinists, who camouflaged their disgraceful treachery with socialist verbiage. The banner of proletarian solidarity was held aloft only by the Leninist Party in Russia and small internationalist groups in other countries, saving the honour of the international working-class movement and fighting social-chauvinism. Their uncompromising internationalism bore out Lenin's words that the true revolutionary social-democratic movement "is in its essence an international movement".*

The Communist International was formed as an association of true internationalists. Its Programme, adopted at its First Congress, stated that subordination of national interests to internationalist tasks makes it possible "to promote mutual assistance between the proletariat of different countries, while without economic and other forms of mutual assistance the proletariat is unable to build the new society". Unlike the social-patriotic International, the Communist International declared that it "will support the exploited peoples of the colonies in their struggle against imperialism in order to facilitate the final collapse of the system of world imperialism".**

Throughout the history of the communist movement,

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 5, p. 370.

** *Lenin and the Communist International*, p. 134 (in Russian).

both when the Comintern functioned and after the switch to new forms of international unity, the Communist parties, as genuine Marxist-Leninist vanguards, have always been faithful to proletarian internationalism, regarding it as a condition of the success of their struggles within national boundaries and on the scale of the entire movement in the world.

The ideals of proletarian internationalism have become the flesh and blood of the international communist movement. But this does not imply that this has put a stop to the penetration of the poison of nationalism into its ranks. Since its own country is the area in which each Communist Party functions directly, the soil may arise for a non-dialectical interpretation of the correlation between national tasks and internationalist aims. National self-awareness grows rapidly in countries where the aims of national liberation have to be achieved. But this positive process can also create the conditions for nationalism. The fact that the petty bourgeoisie forms the predominant or large part of the population likewise provides fertile soil for nationalistic views. Moreover, a malign influence is exercised by the constant pressure of bourgeois ideology, which malevolently goads nationalistic prejudices and denigrates all progressive ideas as allegedly inconsistent with a given country's specifics and the national spirit of the people.

Marxism-Leninism is a universal teaching bringing to light not local but global regularities. The journal *Party Life* ridicules those who consider the law of gravitation British on the grounds that it was discovered by the Englishman Isaac Newton, and charge the scientists guided by this law with depending on foreign science. "With equal vehemence the CPI denies that Marxism-Leninism is foreign to India! Marxism-Leninism is foreign to no country and to no people."* The Communist Party of In-

* *Party Life*, May 7, 1974, p. 13.

dia is guided by Marxist-Leninist theory, which develops through the scientific generalisation of developments in society, nature and social thought, and it applies this theory to the conditions in India, in other words, it acts as "any scientist in India does with the fundamental laws and discoveries of his specific discipline".*

Of course, not all of those in the working-class movement who do not wish to reveal themselves as open nationalists will blindly repeat the simple set of formulas prompted by bourgeois ideology. Today, when the ideals of internationalism are becoming more and more widespread, nationalistic views are frequently not pronounced openly. By analogy with the fact noted by Lenin that the opportunists are prepared to use Marxist terminology to express their anti-Marxist views, it may be said that in many cases the nationalistic views penetrating the communist movement are accompanied by vows of devotion to internationalism. In the spring of 1914 Lenin wrote that it was important to repulse *every kind* of nationalism both coarse and violent and the "most refined nationalism which preaches the equality of nations *together* with ... the *splitting up* of the workers' cause, the workers' organisations and the working-class movement *according to* nationality".**

Since then there have been modifications in coarse and violent nationalism. Nationalism, which does not act openly but dresses itself in internationalist garb, has become particularly subtle. This makes it more difficult to perceive its real essence and to fight it.

Lenin, who regarded all manifestations of nationalism as bourgeois, as alien to proletarian ideology, nevertheless urged support for the democratic content that can be acquired by the bourgeois nationalism of an oppressed nation fighting its enslavers. In oppressed

* *Party Life*, May 7, 1974, p. 15.

** V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 20, p. 289.

countries nationalism is the foundation for unity in the struggle for independence and has a progressive slant as an anti-imperialist force. Once freedom is won, nationalism plays a different role. On this score Gus Hall writes that reactionary elements use nationalism to mobilise the masses in support of capitalist and neocolonialist policy. Progressive elements, on the other hand, use it to win mass support for a policy that can continue the struggle for national liberation until complete independence is achieved and an advance is made in the direction of socialism. "The invention of 'two kinds of nationalism' opens the gates to replacing proletarian internationalism with 'progressive nationalism'. The invention of 'two kinds of nationalism' is a cover for the penetration of bourgeois nationalism into the outlook of parties. Instead of inventing 'excuses' for bourgeois nationalism the Marxist point of view is that the ideological concept of proletarian internationalism must be dominant and finally will replace all other concepts."*

Whatever their form, the nationalistic tendencies penetrating the communist movement ultimately give precedence to national interests over internationalist aims and lead to isolation from the common struggle, to evasion of joint actions with the Communist parties of other countries. By refusing to join in the international struggle, orienting themselves on internal issues and turning away from the international communist movement, some Communist leaders weaken their parties, for they deprive them of the possibility of being a serious force in the struggle against bourgeois nationalism.

Nationalism often manifests itself in the exaggeration of the national specifics of one's own country, in a laudation of the great past of one's own people, of its special origin to the extent that this unwittingly drives a wedge

* Gus Hall, *Imperialism Today. An Evaluation of Major Issues and Events of Our Time*, New York, 1972, p. 294.

between one nation and another, accentuates the national element and belittles the role of the class and the Party element. For instance, a nation is regarded almost as the only factor of present-day progress or as the motive force at the present stage of civilisation and in the foreseeable future. Nationalism is seen in an uncritical attitude to traditions, when the traditions planted by the exploiting classes are extolled alongside revolutionary, democratic traditions, or when it is forgotten that by themselves traditions mean little and depend on to whom the appeal is made.

Marxism-Leninism does not draw a dividing line between the national and the international, but regards them in unity, holding that one cannot be a consistent internationalist if one ignores the national requirements of one's own people and the specifics of the conditions in which they have to wage their struggle. At the same time, the Marxists believe that one cannot be a consistent patriot if one turns his back on the rest of the world, ignores common laws of social development and takes no interest in vital issues that must be settled for national objectives to be attained too. The Communists vigorously oppose both nationalism and national nihilism, which likewise injures the liberation struggle.

National nihilism, which is a characteristic feature of pseudo-Leftism, is displayed particularly by the Trotskyists. J. Posadas writes of himself and his associates: "By nationality we are Marxists."* This demonstrative scorn for nationality is not a slip of the tongue, but stems from Trotsky's following thesis: "The unshakeable certainty that the basic class aim . . . cannot be achieved by national means or within national boundaries is the essence of revolutionary internationalism." With this thesis as the point of departure, the selfsame Posadas declares, "It is not necessary to take

* *Lucha Obrera*, September 1, 1972.

the regional interest into account.”* Hence the categorical conclusion of the Spanish Trotskyists, who proclaimed in the mid-1960s: “Let it be said that any struggle within national boundaries is reactionary.”

As in the past, the Trotskyists speak of “world socialism” (some adherents of the “Fourth International” call their groups “International-Socialist” and even publish a journal) to exonerate their evasion of the day-to-day struggle for the vital needs of the people, for political rights. During the Second World War many Trotskyists in France refused to join the Resistance on the pretext that “it is not necessary to fight for national independence”, while today they proclaim: “The proletariat has no homeland, and its aim is not to create it but to form a network of workers’ councils throughout the world.” On this basis, they reject the need for a Party in individual countries. They argue that the interests of the world revolution require the formation of a world party. As they see it, “The world-wide triumph of the socialist revolution—and the revolution can be victorious only on a world-wide scale—is inconceivable without the headquarters of such a revolution, a world party of the proletarian revolution”. The irresponsible Trotskyist groups, which cannot unite even on a national scale, contemplate schemes for an “integrated world party”.

Projects aside, despite its thunderous fulminations against the world bourgeoisie, Trotskyist cosmopolitanism in effect coalesces with the cosmopolitan ideology of international monopoly capital, which preaches indifference to the destinies and social problems of one’s own country for the sake of a “world state”, a “world government” and “world citizenship” in the interests of the giant multinational corporations.

The pseudo-revolutionary advocates of national nihilism go so far as to cite the *Manifesto of the Communist*

* *Red Flag*, March 4, 1972, p. 3.

Party, naturally saying nothing of its actual content. In 1908 Lenin wrote: “That ‘working men have no country’ was really said in the *Communist Manifesto*. . . . But it does not follow from this that . . . it is of no concern to the proletariat in what country it lives—in monarchical Germany, republican France or despotic Turkey. The fatherland, i.e., the given political, cultural and social environment, is a most powerful factor in the class struggle of the proletariat. . . . The proletariat cannot be indifferent to the political, social and cultural conditions of its struggle; consequently it cannot be indifferent to the destinies of its country.”*

The anarchist, cosmopolitan demand for the “abolition of the fatherland” is alien to true revolutionaries, whose aim is to create socialist fatherlands in place of the bourgeois states with their social and national injustice. Today socialism is the most consistent expression of patriotism, and for that reason the bourgeoisie, which is increasingly feeling the helplessness of its arguments against socialism, depicts the champions of socialism as non-patriots.

As the bourgeoisie becomes more cosmopolitan and sells national interests more and more shamelessly it brazenly depicts its adversaries as unpatriotic. The fascist dictatorship established in Chile following the imperialist-inspired military coup has placed itself entirely in the service of the US monopolies. This tyrannical dictatorship dares to charge the patriots it is destroying with being unpatriotic. Similar hypocrisy is part of the arsenal of the military dictatorship in Uruguay. In the *Manifesto* published in February 1974 by the Communist Party of Uruguay, which has been driven underground, it is stated: “We Communists are true patriots. We are patriots because we are the political force of the working class, the unbreakable core of the Uruguayan people.

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 15, pp. 194-95.

And for us the homeland is, above all, the ordinary people who have built and continue to build our country. We are patriots because we love our country and its freedom-loving democratic traditions, and respect social justice and the material and cultural heritage of the people.

"We are patriots," the Manifesto declares, "also because we want to see our country completely independent of the foreign imperialist yoke, because we are unswerving and consistent anti-imperialists." The Communists are internationalists precisely because they are consistent anti-imperialists, and imperialism is a world force. It is today becoming increasingly obvious that no true patriot can hold aloof from the revolutionary struggle in other countries.

The mounting integrational processes through which the capitalists hope to extricate themselves from the crisis and prolong their existence are making growing unity among the working people of different countries vital in the struggle against capitalism. At the Brussels Conference of Communist and Workers' Parties of European Capitalist Countries (1974) it was noted that the multinational corporations, in which 75 per cent of the shares belong to US financial groups, are increasing their pressure on the economic life of different countries. The governments are encouraging the operations of these giant octopi, which encroach upon the economic and even political independence of countries. The multinational corporations endeavour to ignore trade union rights and the social gains of the people, bring down their living standard and support the most reactionary, including fascist, trends. By moving capital in their quest for maximum profits, they deprive thousands of people of employment at a single stroke.

In view of the deepening of capitalism's crisis, the mounting inflation and the dangerous plans for activating NATO and the arms race, the conference urged an intensification of joint action by the Communist parties and

the creation of broad democratic alliances against the enemies of detente, against the multinational corporations, and for an "offensive that will open the way for new decisions conforming to the interests of the working people and nations of this part of Europe".*

The fatherland remains the direct scene of the struggle of the working class and all other working people, but the importance of concerted actions on a regional and larger scale is growing. The more actively the struggle unfolds in each country, the more will these joint actions be successful. The passiveness of one's neighbour as an excuse for one's own passiveness only plays into the hands of the common enemy.

The Communists are convinced that neither integration nor common class interests can eliminate the contradictions between the imperialist states. Imperialism's adaptation to the new conditions does not in any way signify capitalism's stabilisation as a system. The conclusion drawn by the Communists is that an isolated struggle against the multinational corporations and capitalist associations such as the EEC and NATO cannot count on success.

Since capitalism continues to be governed by the law of uneven development, and the inter-imperialist contradictions are not shrinking but only acquiring new forms, Lenin's conclusion that the weakest links of world imperialism are bound to show and that a revolutionary breakthrough is possible precisely in these links has lost none of its significance. As a result of the integrational processes taking place in the capitalist world the dropping out of a weak link from the imperialist system can only generate a faster chain reaction—both revolutionary and counter-revolutionary—than may have been the case in the absence of integration.

The ever closer bond between the national and interna-

* *Cahiers du communisme*, March 1974, p. 141.

tional struggle predetermines the simultaneous enhancement of the national and international responsibility of the revolutionary vanguards. The Main Document adopted at the 1969 International Meeting of Communist and Workers' Parties states: "Each Communist Party is responsible for its activity to its own working class and people and, at the same time, to the international working class. The national and international responsibilities of each Communist and Workers' Party are indivisible."* The changes that have taken place in the world since that meeting was held still further underscore this indivisibility.

In the new situation the attitude to existing socialism, first and foremost, to the Soviet Union, the strongest force opposed to imperialism, acquires growing significance as the criterion of true internationalism. "Of course," the journal *Political Affairs*, organ of the Communist Party of the USA, wrote in October 1974, "no class or liberation movement anywhere in the world can make headway without depending first of all on its own resources. At the same time, it must be recognised that advances anywhere against imperialism are inextricably linked to the role of the socialist camp, headed by the Soviet Union, which accelerates the struggle against international monopoly in the imperialist countries and in the countries struggling for liberation from imperialism."

The imperialist bourgeoisie use anti-Sovietism not only as a means against the socialist world but also to disunite the progressive forces in their own countries and cut them off from their most consistent ally, which renders the liberation movements moral, political, economic and, if necessary, military assistance. It is, therefore, no accident that reaction gives such active support to all Right-revisionist trends, Leftists and, in particular, Trotskyism,

* *International Meeting of Communist and Workers' Parties, Moscow 1969, p. 37.*

which constantly slanders the USSR and other socialist countries, charging them with "national narrowness", "national seclusion" and "betrayal of the world revolution". If anybody, the imperialists know that the Soviet Union and the entire socialist community are helping the struggle of the people of the capitalist countries by their example, by their foreign policy of peace and energetic actions on the international scene. The importance of the example set by socialism frightens the bourgeoisie more and more because today this example is not merely evidence of the new system's advantages but a tangible embodiment of what is growing increasingly urgent for the settlement of the aggravating problems that are strangling capitalism.

The place held by real socialism in the world revolutionary process is evidence that today internationalism cannot be anti-Soviet and that one cannot be a consistent patriot if one turns away from the Soviet Union and other socialist countries.

As parties of action, the Communist vanguards formulate their attitude to patriotism and to internationalism not as to something that is merely proclaimed. The unity between patriotism and internationalism underlies the day-to-day struggle waged by the Communist parties. Patriotism and internationalism form the point of departure from which they assess various events or class forces. And the indivisibility between patriotism and internationalism defines their relations with each other.

2. TOWARDS CLOSER INTERNATIONAL UNITY OF THE COMMUNIST PARTIES

The modern international communist movement emerged as a united force on the world scene. The organisational forms of this unity underwent changes with the strengthening of the Communist parties and as the tasks facing them grew more complicated. Following almost

two and a half decades of development within the framework of the Communist International, an organisation founded on the principles of democratic centralism, the communist movement passed to unity based on the sovereignty and independence of the parties in it. This unity meets with the specifics of the present phase of the struggle against imperialism, for the triumph of the socialist system. But the fact that each Communist Party independently adopts all its decisions does not mean that the unity of the international communist movement can be allowed to be impaired. On the contrary, it must be constantly reinforced in accordance with current revolutionary tasks.

In view of the independence of its contingents, it is not a simple matter to promote the international unity of the communist movement. Of course, the Communist vanguards are united by their common ideology of Marxism-Leninism, and they have a common aim—the triumph of communism. But since each Party operates in the specific conditions of its own country it may have its own approach to common tasks and different shades in its assessments of concrete problems. Moreover, the parties do not exist in a vacuum; they feel the pressure of bourgeois and petty-bourgeois ideology.

Since imperialism is losing more and more positions in the competition between the two systems, the capitalists are finding they have to use more subtle methods in the ideological struggle. At the 25th Congress of the CPSU Gus Hall, General Secretary of the Communist Party of the USA, said: "Opportunism appears wherever strong ideological pressure is felt from the enemy."* Communism's ideological opponents constantly endeavour to undermine the unity of the communist movement through nationalism. Because there is an objective basis that can not only strengthen but also weaken unity, considerable importance is attached to the subjective efforts of each

* *Pravda*, March 2, 1976.

Party to foster the cohesion of the movement as a whole.

One of the principal devices employed by revisionist elements in their attempts to undermine the international unity of the Communists is to run a dividing line between unity and the independence of parties. This method is borrowed entirely from the arsenal of bourgeois means of fighting communism. If a Communist Party attends an international conference, bourgeois propaganda loses no time in accusing it of "having lost its independence" and taking orders from without. If a delegation from any Communist Party meets with representatives of the CPSU, the anti-communist press begins to howl that the delegation had gone to receive "instructions from Moscow".

Relaxation of international tension does not lead simultaneously to the disappearance of the cold war in all areas of social life. The cold war is not only a foreign policy; for many capitalist countries it has become a way of life. It has given rise to its own literature, system of education and methods of manipulating the minds of the population. One of the most deep-rooted survivals of the cold war is the constant striving to portray Communists as "agents of the Kremlin" and the Communist parties as organisations directed from abroad and thereby make people suspect and distrust them.

The Communist parties adhering to proletarian internationalism and keenly interested in strengthening the international unity of their movement, emphatically condemn the artificial division between solidarity and independence and show the class manipulation behind this division. When the cold war was at its height William Kashtan wrote that "monopoly has been able to build a false image of our parties in many countries, added to by our own mistakes, of Communist parties that do not base themselves on the national interests, on the interests of their people".* Without departing from the principles of

* *World Marxist Review*, July 1965, p. 40.

internationalism, the Communists of each capitalist country are waging a day-to-day struggle to dissipate this impression, coming forward as champions of national interests and not concealing the fact that they are a contingent of the international communist movement.

Marxistische Blätter, journal of the Marxists of the FRG, has done much to expose the aims pursued by the striving to tear their Party away from the international communist movement. The reactionary bourgeois press, as might have been expected, is trying to discredit the international links of the German Communist Party and the solidarity and support that its struggle receives from the world communist movement, asserting that the GCP is not an independent but a dependent Party. The GCP is in fact dependent. It is dependent on the interests and demands of the working class, for it is part of the working class. It is dependent on socialism, for it is a Marxist Party, and scientific socialism is the foundation of its work. In this dependence, *Marxistische Blätter* writes, lies our strength and our conviction, while the really existing dependence of the bourgeois parties on capitalism underlies their hostility for the workers and the fact that they are doomed by history.

In a society divided into classes there are leaders, press organs and even organisations that declare themselves "independent", but this is only a subterfuge designed to conceal and camouflage their dependence on the interests of capital. The Communists do not hide that they champion the interests of the working class and all working people, that they cherish not only the interests of their own country but also the liberation struggle waged against capitalism throughout the world. Renunciation of internationalism and belittlement of the significance of dependence on the struggle of the international proletariat strengthen the hand of bourgeois ideology and nationalism, and ultimately serve alien interests. The Danish Communists have seen for themselves what it would

mean to give in and put up with the revisionists, who have renounced proletarian internationalism and attempted to "conceal their departure from Marxism-Leninism with talk of 'independence'. In substance, it was a question of the Party's life or death".*

The internationalist links, which the Communist parties hold dear, in no way undermine their independence, and far from being a hindrance help them to fight for the aims of the working people of their country.

Reporting to the 25th Congress of the CPSU Leonid Brezhnev declared: "We should like to lay special emphasis on the importance of proletarian internationalism in our time. It is one of the main principles of Marxism-Leninism. Unfortunately, some have begun to interpret it in such a way that, in effect, little is left of internationalism. There are even people who openly suggest renouncing internationalism. In their opinion the internationalism substantiated and promoted by Marx and Lenin is outmoded. But as we see it, to renounce proletarian internationalism is to deprive Communist parties and the working-class movement in general of a mighty and tested weapon. It would work in favour of the class enemy who, by the way, actively coordinates its anti-communist activities on an international scale. We Soviet Communists consider defence of proletarian internationalism the sacred duty of every Marxist-Leninist."**

Of course, each Communist Party must itself understand the tasks confronting its country and opportunely see the processes taking place in it. But can one clearly see one's own tasks if one holds aloof from the life of other people and limits one's outlook to one's country. Jose Carlos Mariategui, founder of the Peruvian Communist Party, who visited Europe in the early 1920s and attended

* *World Marxist Review*, December 1974, p. 18.

** L. I. Brezhnev, *Report of the CPSU Central Committee and the Immediate Tasks of the Party in Home and Foreign Policy*, p. 37.

the historic Congress of the Italian Socialists in Livorno (1921) that laid the beginning for the foundation of the Italian Communist Party, wrote: "*For us the trip to Europe was the best and fullest discovery of America.*"*

Knowledge of the experience of other countries, of fraternal parties is not simply a means of enlarging one's world outlook and a vital condition for a deeper understanding of the general laws of social development, but a condition for understanding the specifics of one's own country. With the paradoxicality that was all his own, Bernard Shaw made one of the personages of his play *John Bull's Other Island* say: "I did not know what my own house was like, because I had never been outside it."** Isolation in one's own house, national narrowness can only seem national at first glance, but in fact it is anti-national because it deprives one of the possibility of understanding the aims that must be achieved in one's own country.

The Communists therefore regard the links and comparison of experience and views between the fraternal parties as a vital prerequisite for joint action on an international scale and an indispensable condition for the successful settlement of national problems.

The importance of the collective experience accumulated through cooperation between the Communist parties of all countries lies in the fact that however valuable and original the experience of any single Party may be this experience is one-sided. Exchanges of knowledge, free discussions and the identification of achievements or omissions help the parties to surmount one-sided views and learn from each other. Gus Hall writes that refusal to compare experience on the pretext that collective discus-

* Jose Carlos Mariategui, *Seven Essays on Peruvian Realities*, Moscow, 1963, p. 18 (Russian translation).

** Bernard Shaw, *John Bull's Other Island*, London, 1912, p. 18.

sion conflicts with the norms of "autonomy" or "interferes in the internal affairs of parties" is a "form of accommodation to the pressures of the enemy. The pressure of the enemy attack is that the Communist parties are not indigenous or autonomous".*

The greater the need that the communist movement has for exchanges of experience and coordination of the actions of all its contingents, the more vicious becomes the pressure of the hostile class forces that strive to use the problem of the "autonomy of parties" to disunite the Communists of different countries. This problem should not, therefore, be regarded abstractly, outside the underlying principles of proletarian internationalism.

In an article headed "Proletarian Internationalism. Past and Present" Friedl Färnberg, member of the Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Austria, writes: "As soon as our opponents engage in a discussion of 'independence' and 'non-interference' they immediately put all their cards on the table: relations between Communist parties are not necessary, exchanges of experience are superfluous, comradesly discussions are not needed (all this apparently being regarded as 'interference'!) Straightaway their political objective is obvious: to deal a blow at the movement of international proletarian solidarity, and so carry out more effectively their own interference, the oppression of the people."**

Exchanges of experience between Communist parties are thus not only a vital requirement of the movement but a sphere of struggle against bourgeois ideology, its striving to inject nationalistic feeling into one Communist Party or another.

Exchanges of experience and comparisons of viewpoints are, of course, not merely dispassionate mutual

* *World Marxist Review*, August 1974, p. 27.

** *World Marxist Review*, June 1973, p. 31.

information. If this were so, if experience were not analysed and its merits and shortcomings were not commented upon, collective thought would not develop. Vagueness is alien to the fraternal relations between political fighters adhering to one and the same ideology. These relations are impelled by a desire to improve the common cause. There may be critical comments and discussions when experience is analysed, for, as Lenin wrote, "...no movement, including the working-class movement, is possible without debates, controversy and conflict of opinions".*

If parties do not exchange views, if they do not state their standpoint, how can they know where they agree or disagree. If a Party were to discuss all problems solely within its own organisation this would weaken it politically and ideologically.

Many Communist parties are of the opinion that discussions of experience should be frank and creative. In the Central Committee report to the 20th Congress of the Communist Party of Belgium (1971) it is stated: "We believe that it is necessary and useful to analyse the problems, situations and phenomena encountered by other parties and eventually express our opinion on the best way to facilitate reciprocal information and exchanges of views, and harmonise attitudes. We do not hesitate to say that for our part the opinion of fraternal parties on the development of our activities is useful to us."**

The Communist parties are against interference by any Party in the internal affairs of another, but they do not adopt a stand that flatly rejects critical comments regarding a fraternal Party and does not permit any discussion of the views of a fraternal Party on the international communist movement. Had this stand been adopted as

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 19, p. 492.

** PCB-XXe Congrès. *Perspectives de la lutte des classes en Belgique*, Rapport du Marc Drumaux, Brussels, 1971, p. 12.

a norm of relations between parties it would have turned the international communist movement from a united movement into a simple sum of reciprocally indifferent parties.

Different views on individual issues may unquestionably arise between parties. Charilaos Florakis, First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Greece, points out that it is vital to distinguish the character of the differences that may appear in the international communist movement. Differences that do not affect the substance of Marxist-Leninist theory and policy and touch solely on particular issues are one thing. Differences affecting the foundation and essence of revolutionary ideology are another. Differences on particular issues are frequently due to the specifics of the position of one Party or another. There are cases when some factors are ignored, others are exaggerated or new problems are resolved belatedly. Differences of this kind are usually smoothed over in the joint struggle against imperialism. Bilateral and multilateral meetings of representatives of different parties, exchanges of experience and views and constructive comradely criticism help to harmonise common attitudes. Differences over basic issues of theory and policy are usually the result of the penetration of bourgeois or petty-bourgeois nationalistic views into the communist movement. When the attempts to settle differences of this kind are unsuccessful, irreconcilability is inevitable and a long struggle is sometimes needed to strike a crushing ideological and political blow at revisionism and nationalism. "There is no other way," writes Florakis. "That being the case, neutrality, tolerance towards those who undermine the ideological and political foundations of unity, is, in our view, objectively tantamount to encouraging the splitters and rendering deliberate, or unintentional, service to international imperialism."**

* *World Marxist Review*, December 1973, p. 34.

The Communist Party of the Soviet Union is consistently guided by the principle of the independence, autonomy, mutual respect and equality of all Communist parties. It holds that when it is understood correctly the principle of independence does not conflict with the international solidarity of parties; if it is accentuated to the detriment of such solidarity it easily provides a loophole for the penetration of hostile ideology into the communist movement. At the preparatory meeting of fraternal parties of Europe in December 1974, Boris Ponomarev, Alternate Member of the Political Bureau and Secretary of the Central Committee of the CPSU, said: "The widening diversity of the conditions of revolutionary activity, the steep growth of the volume and significance of the internationalist tasks of the Communists of all countries and the attempts from different sides to undermine the communist movement through nationalism underscore the importance of continuing to safeguard, disseminate and consolidate the ideals of proletarian internationalism in the world communist movement."^{*}

The international communist movement has worked out and develops genuinely democratic norms of relations between fraternal parties. Bilateral and regional meetings are held in a comradely atmosphere that allows each Party to state its views and contribute to the theory and policy of the international communist movement. In speaking of the significance of criticism for the successful work of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, Lenin said it was important that criticism should take "account of the position of the Party, surrounded as it is by a ring of enemies".^{**} Today when the anti-communist forces are making a considerable effort to bring out differences between Communist parties, magnify the least shades in their attitudes and depict every divergence as the col-

^{*} *Pravda*, December 21, 1974.

^{**} V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 32, p. 243.

lapse of international unity, these words of Lenin are much more pregnant of meaning than when they concerned only the internal life of the Communist Party of one country.

By creating an atmosphere of comradeship at international meetings and displaying the maximum tact in their relations with each other, the Communist parties strive to work out solutions that are accepted unanimously. The international communist movement cannot be guided by the principle of democratic centralism, and this means that the method of adopting mandatory decisions by a majority vote is unacceptable, too. Each Party is free to maintain its own view on one issue or another but it will, of course, reckon with the predominant opinion in the international communist movement, and in any case its special stand cannot be regarded as a veto. In expressing his confidence that joint decisions by Communists were vital, János Kádár said: "We are certain that each Party will work independently to carry out these tasks on the basis of its own decisions and by methods and forms best suited to its circumstances and conditions, and that it will be guided by its responsibility for the common cause. It is necessary to work together for the common cause in such a way and with the awareness that the successes or difficulties of individual Communist parties influence the movement as a whole and, conversely, that the results of the movement influence the condition of individual parties."^{*}

During the difficult years of the preparations for the 1969 International Meeting of Communists, which was hindered in every possible way by the Right and "Left" revisionists, the Marxists-Leninists were confident that it was possible to strengthen the unity of the communist movement and work out the norms of relations between parties in keeping with the obtaining situation.

^{*} *Pravda*, December 20, 1974.

In *National Interests and Internationalist Tasks* Zoltán Komócsin makes many interesting points about the international unity of Communists. He writes of the importance of bilateral and multilateral meetings, which allow the parties to come together and comprehensively study each other's experience. Further, these meetings are evidence of the autonomy and independence of each individual Party.* Komócsin writes that to oppose a broad international conference is as big a mistake as to ignore such a conference. All these forms of intercourse between Communists are necessary, and not one of them can be given precedence over another. Komócsin notes that it is fetishism "when Communists, partly by themselves and partly under the influence of bourgeois propaganda, overdramatise the situation and begin to speculate what the world will say if a conference is held and is not attended by some parties".**

True unity is strengthened in a joint struggle, in the course of which differences are surmounted, the correctness of one or another stand is checked and a common viewpoint is worked out on an ever larger range of issues. The 1969 International Meeting united the Communist and Workers' parties round the task of fighting world imperialism. This political unity demonstrated its strength in mass international political campaigns.

"The successes of the world communist movement," Leonid Brezhnev said at the 25th Congress of the CPSU, "are borne out by the fact that many items of the programme of anti-imperialist actions advanced by the 1969 Meeting have been fulfilled. Along with the Communist parties of other countries, we can now say that the road and the main objectives of the struggle had been defined correctly, and that joint work for the good of the peoples

* Zoltán Komócsin, *National Interests and Internationalist Tasks*, Moscow, 1974, p. 275 (Russian translation).

** Ibid., p. 277.

has evoked a broad response among the masses and is yielding useful results."* By their coordinated efforts the Communists of all countries made a large contribution towards relaxing international tension, defeating US imperialism in its war against the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, supporting the Arab peoples against Israel's aggressive policies, organising a movement of solidarity with the patriots of Chile, and many other international actions.

But the practice of the class struggle requires an ever higher level of unity among Communists. In the new situation created by the deepening of capitalism's crisis, the Communists of the European countries have come to the conclusion that keeping the people informed of their Marxist-Leninist assessments of the situation and of the problems stemming from it would foster the struggle for peace and social progress.

The vast majority of the Communist parties have declared themselves in favour of another international meeting. Many of them consider that unity is rising to a new level. The international communist movement is an alliance of like-minded people. While the democratic forces can be united on a national or international scale around the common aim of heterogeneous forces professing different ideologies, the unity of the Communist vanguards requires increasing ideological cohesion. "The general guideline of the Communists in questions of ideology," Leonid Brezhnev said in Warsaw, "is essentially an integral guideline. It is, we are sure, our common standing obligation, our duty to the working people of the socialist countries, to the world working class, to strengthen our ideological unity and steadfastly abide by the Leninist principles of struggle against any retreat from Marxism-Leninism, from socialist international-

* L. I. Brezhnev, *Report of the CPSU Central Committee and the Immediate Tasks of the Party in Home and Foreign Policy*, p. 37.

ism.”* The Communists of many countries consider that the preparations for and the meeting itself are a political and ideological process. During that process the changing alignment of forces in the world is considered collectively, experience of the class struggle is exchanged, new developments are studied and Marxism-Leninism is developed.

The international meetings of Communists on various theoretical problems and the collective elaboration of urgent problems by representatives of the Communist parties of different countries organised by the journal *World Marxist Review*, and the symposiums held during the preparations for the Conference of European Communist Parties were evidence of the growing need for deeper ideological unity among the Communist parties. The present situation accentuates the significance of Lenin's words that “*united action* on an international scale calls for both clarity of fundamental ideological views and a precise definiteness in all practical methods of struggle”.**

International cooperation among the Communist parties is dictated not only by the direct requirements of the struggle for immediate aims. This cooperation is projected into the long term. Gus Hall justifiably writes: “In proletarian internationalism the working class introduces a kernel of an outlook, the ideological make-up of the future, more advanced civilisation. It presents a kernel of the one-worldness of future relationships. It presents the kernel of the new morality, the ethics of a society not torn apart by a greedy drive for profits. It is an effective weapon of struggle because it contains the seeds of classless tomorrows.”***

* *Pravda*, July 22, 1974.

** V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 21, p. 372.

*** Gus Hall, op. cit., p. 289.

The international communist movement is inspired by historical optimism and a readiness to fight for the interests of the working class and all other working people, for the solution of the problems facing mankind.

* * *

Marxist-Leninist parties are enjoying growing influence and prestige, their unity is growing stronger and the difficulties of the 1960s, one of the most complex periods in the history of the international communist movement, are receding into the past. The animation of Leftist pseudo-revolutionism and Right revisionism have inflicted damage on the communist movement. Reactionaries all over the world counted on the Communist parties succumbing to barren Leftism, which leads into an impasse, or giving way to Right-opportunist trends and thereby losing its militancy. They gloated in the belief that the forces faithful to Marxism-Leninism would be unable to surmount the obstacles encountered by them. The bourgeois and reformist press alleged that the international communist movement was in the throes of a hopeless crisis: “Indeed, not only is the world communist movement no longer monolithic, but it is arguable whether it exists at all.”*

However, the authors of allegations of this kind soon saw that they were the victims of their own propaganda. The Communist Party of the Soviet Union and the fraternal Marxist-Leninist parties have remained confident that the unity of the international communist movement will grow stronger if a principled struggle is waged consistently on two fronts—against Right and “Left” revisionism—and the purity of the Marxist-Leninist teaching, of its internationalist essence is safeguarded.

While strengthening the unity of the international

* *Problems of Communism*, January-February 1970, p. 19.

communist movement, the Marxist-Leninist forces gained a more profound understanding of present-day realities and enriched revolutionary theory, including the teaching on the role of the vanguard Party, which was most violently attacked by all varieties of revisionists and pseudo-revolutionaries.

The International Meeting of Communist and Workers' Parties, convened in 1969 after long and difficult preparations, and then the 24th Congress of the CPSU in the spring of 1971, and the congresses of the fraternal parties of socialist countries held in the same year marked a turning point in the development of the international communist movement, opening up new possibilities for strengthening its cohesion. The meeting declared that it was necessary to "work for the triumph of Marxism-Leninism and, in accordance with the concrete situation, fight against Right- and Left-opportunist distortions of theory and policy, against revisionism, dogmatism and Left-sectarian adventurism".*

The collapse of the hopes for a split in the communist movement, the expulsion of revisionist groups and Leftist elements from the Communist parties and the ideological defeat of the anti-Leninist conceptions in the communist movement helped to further its unity. In subsequent years many Communist parties grew numerically through, and this is extremely important, an influx of young people. They consolidated their positions in the working class, among all strata of the working people. Today no anti-communist publication ventures to write about the international communist movement in the tone used some years ago. In October 1974 the anti-communist journal *Osteuropa* despondently acknowledged that the parties advancing shoulder to shoulder with the CPSU were predominant in the communist movement.

* *International Meeting of Communist and Workers' Parties, Moscow 1969, p. 38.*

With capitalism's general crisis growing deeper and with the appearance of new phenomena shattering the foundations of that exploiting system, anti-communism is employing different tactics. Everywhere it tries to frighten people with the growth of the communist movement and is prepared to declare every struggle in defence of democracy, for the economic and social requirements of the working people, for every progressive reform as the result solely of the work of the Communist parties. By deliberately engaging in this exaggeration, the enemies of communism admit that today social progress is increasingly linked in the minds of the people with the achievements of the socialist countries and of the international working-class and national liberation movements.

But the Communists, whom the declarations of enemies to the effect that their movement is non-existent have not demoralised, soberly assess the situation witnessing the mounting successes of the international communist movement. They clearly see how the struggle against imperialism is becoming more complicated and acute, and the immense responsibility that devolves today on the Marxist-Leninist parties. Revisionism's ideological and organisational defeat by no means signifies that there is no longer any need to fight on two fronts. The soil on which new opportunist trends can emerge will continue to be reproduced as long as capitalism exists. Whatever image these trends assume, there can be no doubt that the problem of the revolutionary vanguard and the principles underlying the activities of the Marxist-Leninist parties will remain one of the pivots of the ideological struggle.

Ever larger segments of the people today regard the Communists not only as a political Party but as the vanguard of the new life that is bringing liberation to all mankind.

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